

T H E
GOSPEL RECOVERED
FROM ITS
CAPTIVE STATE,
AND RESTORED TO ITS
ORIGINAL PURITY.

BY A GENTILE CHRISTIAN.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

WROTE IN DEFENCE OF
WOUNDED AND DESPISED TRUTH.

May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know, therefore, what these things mean. Acts xvii. 19, 20.

And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts, —with false and absurd doctrines—brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. Acts xix. 18, 19.

By education, most have been misled:
They so believe; because they were so bred.
The priest continues what the nurse began:
And thus, the child imposes on the man.

V O L. III.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.
MDCCLXXXIV.

RECORDS
CAPTIVE STATE
ORIGINAL



Entered in Stationers-Hall.

CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

	Page
BOOK III.	
DIAL. IV. Containing a series of Dialogues, betwixt a Jesuit and a Gentile Christian, concerning the Gospel, the nature, the design, and meaning thereof.	5
DIAL. V.	34
DIAL. VI.	54
DIAL. VII. Of Regeneration, or being Born again.	101
BOOK IV.	
DIAL. I. Concerning the nature of Justice.	116
DIAL. II. On Repentance and turning unto God.	192
DIAL. III. Christ having died a sacrifice, a false doctrine; therefore, not to be received	222
BOOK V.	
DIAL. I. On Predestination.	306
DIAL. II. Of Election.	322

E R R A T A.

Page 18, line 16, *read* betwixt the Mosaic &c. Page 45, line 28, *read* among them, viz. the Jews. Page 56, line 32, for *took* *read* takes. Page 113, line 19, *read* From hence, &c. Page 114, line 2, after ceremonies *read* are said to be born again. Page 123, line 5, after But, *read* in the second place. Page 148, line 8, for xxxv. *read* xxv. Page 168, line 25, after to be *read* or rather insisted that he should be. Page 171, line 11, *read* that where a debt, &c. Page 175, last line, after blood, *read* as exprest elsewhere. Page 193, line 25, after every *read* other. Page 214, line 23, *read* But as to forgiveness we &c. Page 226, line 21, after been, *read* equally. Page 233, line 14, for your, *read* their. Page 240, line 11, *read* GEN. The &c. Page 242, line 20, after into *read* open war, &c. Page 283, line 27, *read* GEN. In answer, &c. Page 291, line 13, after apostles, *read* is. Page 310, line 10, for irreconciled *read* not unknown. Page 320, line 11, for they, *read* we. Page 329, line 28, for nation, *read* family. Page 342, line 8, for that, *read* than.

THE
GOSPEL RECOVERED
FROM ITS
CAPTIVE STATE.

BOOK III.

*Containing a Series of Dialogues, betwixt a
JUDAIZING, and a GENTILE
CHRISTIAN, Concerning the Gospel, the
Nature, the Design, and Meaning thereof.*

DIALOGUE IV.

JUD. **I** Heartily acknowledge, that what you have exprest in our last conversation, of the gentiles being taught the gospel in a different dress from the Jews, is, certainly, not without foundation; yet, I could wish to have some additional proofs, before I am convinced thereof.

GEN. That is what will be no hard task; and, if you will admit of truth, when laid before you, I shall then endeavour your satisfaction. Now, Mr. Judaizer, I will therefore beg your attention to what follows.

For proof of the apostle Paul's having preached the gospel under a different dress to the gentiles, than what he did to the Jews, see Galatians chap. ii. 2. "And I went up
" by revelation, and communicated unto
" them that gospel which I preach among
" the gentiles, but privately to them which
" were of reputation, lest by any means I
" should run, or had run, in vain." The apostle tells us, here, expressly, that he communicated the nature of that gospel, which he preached to the gentiles privately, or as a secret to them only that were of reputation, or greatest among the apostles, lest that he should have run, or had run, in vain. Lest that he, by communicating it to such as would have intimated it to the Jews, should thereby have interrupted the progress of the gospel, among that people, *viz.* the Jews, who were so much prejudiced against it: for salvation, independent of the ceremonial law, was what the Jews could by no means either dispense with or abide. Verses 3, 4, 5.
" But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of false brethren un-awares brought in, who came in privately to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you," *viz.* the gentiles. False brethren, in the above, means christian Jews, or Juda-

izing teachers, who came in privily to spy out their liberty, which they had in Christ Jesus, in the freedom of the gospel, independent of Judaism, or Mosaic system; in order that they might subject them thereto, and bring us under the bondage of that detestable slavery, unprofitable to both God and man; save only, those mercenary gentlemen, the priests.

And also, in confirmation of the above, see Acts xxi. 19, 20. where, after the apostle was come to Jerusalem, he conversed with James, and all the elders that were present. "And, when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the gentiles by his ministry. And, when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law. Such of the Jews as became christian, kept fast hold of the ceremonial law, and would have supposed their damnation certain, if they, in the least, had departed from, or given up therewith. Verse 21. "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the gentiles to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." This doctrine is what Paul expressly taught the gentiles; and there is no doubt but his desire was, that the Jews would also comply with it. Verses 22, 23, 24. "What is it therefore? the multitude must

“ needs come together: for they will hear that
“ thou art come. Do, therefore, this that we
“ say to thee: we have four men which have
“ a vow on them; them take, and purify thy-
“ self with them, and be at charges with them,
“ that they may shave their heads: and all
“ may know that those things, whereof they
“ were informed concerning thee, are no-
“ thing; but that thou thyself also walkest or-
“ derly, and keepest the law.” We see here,
that Paul, by the apostles’ advice, was dispos-
ed (though against his will) to comply with
this ceremony, in purchasing sacrifices, in or-
der that he might thereby remove, and take
off the prejudices of the people, *viz.* the Jews,
which prevented them from receiving the gos-
pel, verse 25. “ As touching the gentiles
“ which believe, we have written and con-
“ cluded, that they observe no such things,
“ save only that they keep themselves from
“ things offered to idols, and from blood, and
“ from strangled, and from fornication.” For-
nication being against the law, and hurtful to
society, was thereby excluded: but as for things
offered to idols, we see from St. Paul, that when
people were conscious that there was nothing in
them, the eating thereof was nothing. And
as for blood, and things strangled, we see,
both by Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul, that
they might either eat or not eat, thereof, with-
out offence, verse 26. “ Then Paul took the
“ men, and the next day, purifying himself
“ with them, entered into the temple, to fig-
“ nify the accomplishment of the days of pu-

“rification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.” Thus, Paul, in submitting to the advice of the apostles and elders, underwent the performance of the whole ceremonial law, (though perhaps against his conscience) in order that he might the better keep down the clamour, and assuage the prejudice of the people, by his fulfilling the law of Moses.

JUD. No: Paul kept the law of ceremonies from choice, and not from persuasion, as is evident from chap. xviii. for he, when calling at Ephesus, was desired by the Ephesians to tarry longer with them; but he, verse 21. “bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem.”

GEN. Yes; but that was six years before he was persuaded by the apostles to comply with their advice, in partaking of the ceremonies of the last feast: and he, by that time, had, no doubt, been persuaded of his error, in partaking of the former, of which you relate. But that Paul was prevailed upon to act contrary to his conscience, is no more than what is evident from Galatians ii. 18. “For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” But to return, verses 27, 28. “And, when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, men of Israel, help: this is the man that teacheth all men every where a-

“gainst the people, and the law, and this holy place.”

Hence, it therefore appears evident from the above texts, that the Jews who were scattered abroad beyond the boundaries of Judea, among the different nations where Paul went, in preaching the gospel, had, oft-times, been taught by him the same mode of doctrine, wherein the gentiles had been instructed, by him, in the knowledge of the gospel: this, no doubt, was the cause, why the Jews were so much enraged against him. From which we may, therefore, justly infer, from the above, that the doctrines of the gospel, wherein the gentiles were instructed by the apostles, were altogether independent of Judaism. Nor was the Mosaic institution ever made to corroborate with the gospel, or taught among the gentiles; but only, at such times as when there were Jews intermixed among them: the reason why; lest they, *viz.* the Jews, should have been offended, and thereby prevented from complying with it. And also, when the gospel was preached to the Jews, by the apostles, they always preached it up, answerable to the law of Moses; not daring to separate it therefrom, lest they should have been disgusted thereat, and had rejected the same, by reason of their being prejudiced against it.

From hence, it is therefore to be remarked, that the apostle Paul, when either speaking or writing to the gentiles, no where refers to the Mosaic system, or to those who are canonized amongst that people; but only, when speak-

ing or writing to a promiscuous multitude; which, by reason of that people, *viz.* the Jews, being interspersed throughout the whole Roman Empire, were, thereby, oft-times intermixed with the gentile churches. For it was an usual custom, with both prophets and apostles, when expressing themselves to their own country-men, the Jews, to speak to them in, and after the analogy of their own system, with which the people thereof were acquainted.

But further, is it not also evident, from the above, that the manner in which the gospel was taught the gentiles, was kept a secret from the Jews, in order to prevent their being incensed against it. It is, therefore, now evident, from the foregoing, that Paul, in his politically complying with the apostles' advice, in fulfilling the ceremonial law, after abolished to the gentiles, in order that he might thereby soften, and take off the prejudice of the Jews, against receiving the gospel, is an incontestable evidence, that the epistle to the Hebrews, in particular, and whatever else was either wrote or spoke to that people, concerning the constitution of their law, and terms of their superstition in blending each thereof with the gospel, is, in every respect, just as political as the other, *viz.* Paul in his complying, as observed in the above: and, I verily believe, is beyond the power of the whole human race to prove it otherwise.

Hence, and to proceed; we likewise see, from the above, that, when Paul went up to Jerusalem, he was there advised by the apostles

and elders, for the sake of them that did believe, to conform with Judaism: and also, lest he should have offended such as did not believe. He, likewise, to prevent his falling a prey to the resentment of the unbelieving Jews, did comply with the apostles' advice, in fulfilling the whole ceremonial law; but yet, after all, it proved ineffectual; having almost fallen a victim to their fury, he barely escaped with his life. And further, the apostles, to prevent the Jews, their country-men, from being prejudiced against the gospel, did, therefore, carefully make it to harmonize with their superstition, *viz.* Judaism: and, in order that they might thereby reconcile, and persuade them to comply therewith, did unfortunately blend them together.

Thus, our Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 24. when speaking of the destruction of their city and temple, told expressly the dismal consequence that was awaiting, and would befall that people, verses 21, 22. "For then shall be
" great tribulation, such as was not since the
" beginning of the world to this time, no, nor
" ever shall be. And except those days should
" be shortened, there should no flesh be saved:
" ed: but for the elects sake, those days shall
" be shortened." What is here expressed, may fairly teach us, that there was no salvation to be found, under such a corrupt superstition, as was contained in that favourite system, to which they were so much indulged. This we may learn from its contents, that, by paying in the different fees and duties, payable to

their custom-house, they were entitled to receive a full and ample discharge, for the whole spiritual debts contracted in the course of the past year, independent of either an unfeigned repentance, or turning unto God. Hence, such as are called elect, means those who had accepted of the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, *viz.* the forgiveness of sins, upon their repentance and turning unto God, independent of taking out a clearance from said custom-house.

Thus, Christ plainly foresaw, that, by their blending the pardon of sin, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, as offered to us in the gospel, and charters of said custom-house together, the gospel would become of none effect, to all such as rested thereon for salvation. So that, if this should be the case, there is no flesh could be saved by it. “But for the elects sake, those days shall be shortened.” “But for the elects sake” *viz.* all such as shall heartily accept of the gospel, by their repentance and turning unto God, “those days shall be shortened;” which, in the space of forty years, the whole thereof was accomplished. For if it had not pleased Almighty God to put an end to the Jewish state and peal of worship, the gospel, without doubt, had been entirely swallowed up, and altogether lost in their bigoted superstition. So that, none of that people, according to Christ, could either have profited or have been saved by it.

Hence, we may see from the above, that, by mixing the gospel with the ceremonial law or Jewish custom-house, which had not only been collected, but even raked from among the ashes of the pagan altars, the whole thereof became unprofitable; a mere medley, appearing something, when good for nothing. And, though the object thereof was divine, such a corrupt service, as was paid thereto by that dark and cloudy people, was too gross to have been paid to either a metal or wooden deity, and far less to that of the true God.

JUD. How can you object against Moses and his system, as not being of divine authority; but only as if raked out from among the ashes of paganism, or pagan altars in Egypt, where he had his education? No: he was a man who was educated by God; for it is said, that all things were done by him, according to the pattern showed him in the holy mount.

GEN. So it has been reported; but, who are the recorders of this report?

JUD. They who wrote the Pentateuch.

GEN. Yes; you have answered well: and these were only the priests, a set of mercenary gentlemen, whose living depended solely upon its authority, which they ascribed to God, on purpose, that they might thereby secure their own luxury.

JUD. Do not speak so: priests were holy men.

GEN. Their holiness was such, that no piece of injustice could possibly have been so great,

but what these holy gentlemen could have ascribed God's authority, in support thereof.

JUD. I am sure we are taught that Moses was instructed, and had his education from God.

GEN. Yes; we are informed so; but turn to Acts vii. 22. and there you will see where Moses had his education. "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds."

From hence, it is, therefore, evident, from what is here quoted in the above, that Moses had the first education, that that learned country could possibly afford; for he was educated under Trismegistus, (that is, thrice or three times great; a great philosopher; a great priest; and a great king:) chief Academist in Egypt, not only in philosophy; but in the seminary of the priests or magicians, where he was graduated in every particular branch of liberal science, Egypt could afford, Magic not excepted.

From this, we are, therefore, not to imagine, that the different laws, and orders of men instituted by Moses, in the government of the church and state of Israel, were originally his own. No: for they, no doubt, were collected by him (and his constituents and assistants,) from out of the established laws of Egypt, (where he had spent the first forty years of his life) with the addition of those of Midian, by the help of Jethro his father-in-law. This is no more than what appears evident, in what may be gathered from out of

his own history, which gives us an account of priests, not only in Egypt; but also among the Israelites themselves, though not constitute by law, before ever they, *viz.* the priests, were constituted by Moses, in his Code of Laws, instituted by him for the regulation either of church or state, for the government of that people. But, though that that people had priests among them, according to the custom of Egypt, they had no legal tithes paid them, but only by virtue of the laws instituted in said country; but of no longer effect, after having departed from under that government. The origin of priests is of an early date; they were established in Egypt, perhaps, long before that Joseph went thither, and were second in rank to the king: for we see that Pharaoh, when he appointed Joseph next in rank to himself, to rule over the affairs of that state, he gave him to wife the daughter of Poti-pherah priest or prince of On, or which may be supposed, chief or high priest, who took the lead, and presided over such as were members of that learned society.

Kings, Priests, and Philosophers, are they who made the three first ranks of great men in Egypt. Philosophy was the preparative or introduction, that led to those of a higher degree. The rise of each rank, was progressive. Their philosophers were framed in their Academies, and their priests were elected from among their philosophers, and their kings from among their priests. Priest or prince of On, may be supposed chief or high priest; there-

fore, next to the throne, upon the decease of their then present sovereign.

The above custom, was commonly used by the Egyptians, in making choice of either their kings or of their priests. In these two were established a joint power in government, viz. both that of a civil and ecclesiastic; and, that the one was second in power to the other, is obvious from the state of their revenues. The king, who bare rule in the first, or civil part of that compound government, had one fifth part of the whole produce of that land. The tithes of the priests, who bare the second rule, were ten, free of all public burdens. It was, no doubt, good for the priests, that Joseph was related, by marriage, to that order of men; or they might have suffered, by reason of the dearth, along with the people of the land; if their being second in government, was not a mean to have prevented a fifth part of their lands, from being taken from them for corn, in time of the dearth.

From hence, there is nothing can possibly be more evident, than what appears, and may be supposed from the above; that Moses's plan of government, both of church and state, is only a mere transcript, and, perhaps, of no alteration at all from that which was in Egypt, which is said to have been invented by the Hermes, who were surnamed Trismegistus. The first of these great men, are said to have been Osiris's, king of Egypt, counsellors; and are said to have invented ordinary writing, and hieroglyphics; the first

laws of the Egyptians, and divers sciences. We have likewise an account of more Hermefes than the first: one of which, was the first that began to leave off astrology, to admire the other wonders of nature; he proved there was but one God, Creator of all things; he divided the day into twelve hours, from his observation of a certain animal, which made water twelve times a day, at a certain interval. He is also thought to be the first that divided the Zodiack into twelve signs. Thus far, I have briefly hinted concerning the foundation and constitution of the laws and government of Egypt; and it is more than probable, from what has been observed, in the above, that the only difference betwixt Mosaic institution and paganism, is this; the self same service (with perhaps some degree of alterations) that the heathens paid to their pagan deities, *viz.* that of sacrifices, the Jews paid to the true God.

Hence, is it not therefore surprising, that ever a man of Moses's capacity, should have been guilty of setting forth such a vain and superstitious service to Almighty God, as that of the ceremonial law. Well might the apostle stile the Jewish or ceremonial law, weak, and beggarly elements: for weak, and beggarly elements, they certainly were, to be so much observed, or yet applied to any religion or service paid to the true God. But, 'tis too, too much to be doubted, from the contents thereof, by reason of its lucrative nature, that it was only an invention and forgery of

the priests, to which they borrowed Moses's authority (when gone), in order to support, and give sanction and credit thereto, as well as many other things of like nature, mentioned in the Pentateuch, of which Moses himself, perhaps, never so much as heard. But, if such a thing be, as of Moses having been accessory thereto, he, (knowing) from being acquainted with the covetous disposition of the priests, has only, as I apprehend, admitted thereof as a bribe, made over in favours of these consecrated gentlemen, in order to prevent them from returning back, to partake of the luxurious entertainments of the heathen sacrifices; by which, they would, thereby, have become a snare unto the people.

JUD. I am no less than astonished, at your exposing a system in such a manner, which is said to have come from Almighty God.

GEN. I differ from you of its authority: for, instead of its having come from God, it appears, from its contents, to have been as great an imposition, as ever was made upon the human world. And as for its being said to have come from God; does the 'Turks' Alcoran, because of their ascribing God's authority thereto, give it a right to have come from God, or yet to be received as such?

JUD. No, by no means.

GEN. Neither does Judaism, which is, in every respect, more absurd, and inconsistent with the Nature of God, than the Alcoran itself, give it a right to be received as divine.

JUD. If Moses's system was not from God,

V nor of divine authority, How comes Christ to make mention of him and his system, in his reasoning with the Jews?

GEN. In answer to your objection; it would have been vain for Christ to have reasoned, with that dark and cloudy people, upon any other system than that of their own, which they had received from their ancestors. And the reason, why? because, they would have paid little or no respect thereto. And not only this; but Christ very well knew, that if he had reasoned against, and not in favours of Moses and of his system, to which they were so much bigoted, he was more than certain, they would not only have refused to hear, but would immediately have put him to death; and thereby have prevented the end of his coming into the world, to display the power he received from God: whereby, he might not only set aside, but overturn Moses's system, which was not from God; and establish his own, which he had actually received from him.

And besides all this, Jesus no where saith, (of which I do at present mind,) that Moses's system was from God; or yet so much as delivered by his appointment: for the better understanding of which, see John v. 39. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." What is here exprest in the text, by the word (scripture), includes Moses, in every respect, as much as the prophets. And of this we are certain, that it was only in Moses, in which the Jews trusted and re-

posed their confidence; and on whom also, they laid the whole stress of their religion: for he bids them "Search the scriptures, for in them (saith he) ye think ye have eternal life:" of this, they confidently believed, that the whole of eternal life was comprehended in Moses's system, independent of any other; and to this they did trust. For "in them, saith he, ye think ye have eternal life." But does Christ ever say, that in them they had eternal life? No; he saith no such thing: for he only saith, that in them, they thought, they had eternal life: which includes as much, as, that in Moses's system, where they supposed eternal life to have rested, it was not there to be found. "And they are they which testify of me. Verses 45, 46. Do not think that I will accuse you to the father: (no) there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me" ye would have paid regard to me; and would thereby have considered me as a prophet and teacher, sent from God. As Moses gave you signs and directions, whereby to distinguish a true from a false prophet: So, the signs or marks of a true prophet, according as Moses has described them, do all eminently meet, and show themselves in me. But to proceed, verse 47. "But if ye believe not his writings," which appear to point towards me, in a figurative manner, as

well as the rest, in which is contained the whole of your religion, to which you are so much bigoted, "how shall ye believe my words?" A man, against whom you bear so much prejudice, and have no reverence at all for.

Hence, it, therefore, now appears evident, from what has been express'd in the above, that, though Christ reasoned with the Jews, from out of Moses's system, it was only for their conviction, and condemnation; but no proof of its being divine.

JUD. But did not Christ comply with the ceremonial law?

GEN. In what part thereof?

JUD. With that of the passover.

GEN. Yes; he no doubt complied therewith so far as he saw it necessary, of what might redound, therefrom, to the benefit of the gospel.

JUD. Could his partaking of the passover benefit the gospel?

GEN. Only so far, as by that custom, which had been so long used, in remembrance of a supposed event, kept up by that people; that in partaking thereof, he might thereby establish another ceremony, in remembrance of a more sure and glorious event, accomplished by him, in their deliverance from such vanities as they had formerly been accustomed to, in Moses's institution.

JUD. But is it not said, that Christ fulfilled the whole law?

GEN. Yes; he fulfilled the whole moral law, so far as of a piece, with the law and re-

ligion of nature, but no further: and also the civil, in order that he might thereby prevent giving offence; but as to the ceremonial, or laws of their custom-house, there is not the smallest account, that he either partook or handled thereof. No: for when he went into the temple, he for certain, instead of complying therewith, exprest himself thus, "Is it not written, my house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves." For which saying, the scribes and chief priests, or officers of said custom-house, "sought to destroy him" sought to destroy him, for telling the truth: for telling them of their not only robbing God of his due; but likewise stealing the laity, not only out of their personal substance, but even their very souls.

Hence, there can nothing be more justly exprest, than what these mercenary gentlemen are here stiled, by Christ, under the epithet of a den, or pack, of thieves. For such a scene of perfidious villany, as what was carried on by these canonized gentlemen, was sufficient, of itself, to have brought down a judgment, not only upon a nation; but a world, if once comprehended under the jurisdiction of their consecrated dominion.

JUD. But do you refuse the moral part of Moses's laws being of divine institution?

GEN. No; so far as they, and every other law, are of a piece with the law and religion of nature, I acknowledge they are divine; but no farther.

JUD. In this acknowledgment, you fairly acquiesce of Moses's system being divine.

GEN. If the acknowledgment of their being good morals in Moses's institution, is an acquiescing of Moses's system being divine, the acknowledgment thereof, can by no means be circumscribed to Moses alone. No: for in the laws of other nations, (though heathen) were oft-times as good morals, as in those of Moses; therefore, must be of divine institution also, according to you, Judaizer: for without good morals, in the laws of nations, society could not possibly subsist: for according to the degree of good morals, contained in the laws of every nation; so is the cement of their society: for good morals, when properly attended to, is the cement of all society.

JUD. But do not the laws of our country, require a belief in Moses's system of religion being divine?

GEN. A religion, or yet the articles contained in a religion, that either needs or requires acts of Parliament to subject men to the belief thereof, shall never be mine. For the true and undefiled religion, or gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, which is, "repent and turn unto God, and your iniquities shall be blotted out," needs neither goals nor acts of Parliament, to subject men to believe therein. Hence, but if the divinity of a religion, depends upon acts of Parliament, or the laws of a country, in subjecting people to its belief, not only that of pope-

ry; but the Alcoran, and also the religious systems of the heathen nations, as a belief therein is required of the people by the authority of law, each thereof, (according to you Judaizer) must, of necessity be divine also; but, if any thing further remains, of greater weight than what you have hitherto produced, I hope you will therefore now make it appear.

JUD. I shall then, at your request, advance this one argument more, to those of the above. In proof, therefore, of Moses's system being come from God, we have it told us expressly, in the Evangelists, that both Moses and Elias appeared and talked with Christ at his transfiguration, of which, Peter, James, and John, were witnesses.

GEN. I know, it is exprest in the evangelists, that two men appeared at Christ's transfiguration, which they, (*viz.* Peter, James, and John) took to be Moses and Elias; but Christ himself makes no mention, who it was that appeared; and at that time, they had not so much as received the spirit of truth, whereby they could know, whether they who appeared were those men, *viz.* Moses and Elias or not: and not only this, but Luke tells us, that their eyes were heavy with sleep; therefore, being just only newly got awake, they could be less certain still. And besides all this, we understand from their (*viz.* the three disciples) conversation with Christ, that it was the received opinion of the scribes, that Elias must first come: this saying, is that which, no doubt,

gave them ground to believe so; but Christ, here, soon rectifies the mistake, by telling them, that he whom they took for Elias, was John the Baptist, and was already come. Now, since they, by adopting the opinion of the scribes, were mistaken concerning Elias, they were, in every respect, just as liable of being mistaken concerning Moses. But the reason, why they took these two glorious persons (who are rather to be supposed angels than men) for Moses and Elias; it was an established opinion among the Jews, that both Moses and Elias were translated, or taken up bodily unto heaven. But, though it be said so of Elias, it is not of Moses; for it is said that he died, and was buried in the mount, or near thereto: and, if it had been men that appeared, and not angels, it is rather to be supposed, Enoch and Elijah, or what is called Elias, by reason of their bodies being said to have been personally translated, and taken up to heaven. From this, I apprehend, you have, therefore, not the smallest proof, in all you have advanced, of Moses's system being divine.

JUD. But if Moses's system must go for naught, what do you make of that which is exprest by Luke, Chap. xxiv. 25, 26, 27.
“ Then said he unto them, O fools, and slow
“ of heart to believe all that the prophets have
“ spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered
“ these things, and to enter into his glory?
“ And beginning at Moses and all the pro-
“ phets, he expounded unto them in all the
“ scriptures the things concerning himself.”

See also verses 44, 45, 46. " And said unto
" them, These are the words which I spake
" unto you, while I was yet with you, that all
" things must be fulfilled which were written
" in the law of Moses, and in the prophets,
" and in the psalms, concerning me. Then
" opened he their understandings, that they
" might understand the scriptures, and said
" unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it
" behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from
" the dead the third day."

GEN. This relation, I acknowledge, is delivered by Luke, who had all he wrote, only upon hearsay, or at second hand; but not one syllable thereof, is to be found exprest in the other gospels, by them who were eye-witnesses, and present when he appeared to them.
No.

JUD. Is not Luke's Gospel as much to be depended upon, as those who were wrote by them who were present, when delivered by Jesus?

GEN. One thing I am certain of, that some things exprest by Luke, can never possibly harmonize, with that which is exprest by Matthew, namely, in his tracing of Christ's genealogy; for Matthew proves him to be descended from Solomon, and Luke makes him to have descended from Nathan, his brother: by which means, Luke makes fifteen generations more betwixt Christ and David, than what is reported by Matthew.

JUD. Matthew makes him of the succession, and line of the regal dignity; but Luke,

according to the right of blood. And, to make these two harmonize, some would have Matthew to write Joseph's genealogy, and Luke to write Mary's.

GEN. That Mary was of the line of David, is what none of the human race, neither Jew nor Gentile, can possibly prove; besides all this, the authors of both these genealogies, make them end in Joseph, the supposed father (of Jesus,) without the smallest reference to him, as the Son-in-law: for instead of Mary being of the tribe of Judah, she is rather to be supposed of Levi; for she was cousin to Elizabeth, wife to Zacharias the priest: for the priests generally married with, and among those of their own tribe, for fear of confounding the priestly race.

Hence, I know, indeed, some, in order to prove that Mary was of the house and lineage of David, have taken hold of that which is express by Luke, where he saith in the 2. chap. of his gospel, "That all went to be taxed, every one to his own city; and that Joseph went up from Galilee, into Judea, unto the city of David, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife." From this they suppose, that Mary, because taxed with Joseph, in the city of David, certainly behoved to be of the house and lineage of David; because each thereof, is thought to have been taxed, in the first or principle city of their own tribe. But, is any person so lame, or short of understanding, as not to know, that, when

once a woman is clothed with an husband, she then becomes one of the same family, with whom she is connected; and is, likewise, after joined thereto, called by the name of her husband, to whom she is married. From this it is evident, that Mary behoved to be taxed along with Joseph her husband, to whom she was then espoused. And to this agrees the third verse; for it is said there, that all went to be taxed, every one into his own city, not into their or her own city, but to his own city; which implies as much, as that no woman was taxed, till once she was espoused to an husband, if taxed at all. And to this agrees part of the fourth and fifth verses, where it saith, that Joseph went up from Galilee, unto the city of David, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife.

Further, if Luke had intended to make it appear, by his tracing back this line, that Mary was of the house and lineage of David, in order to prove that Christ was descended therefrom, it was altogether vain to have alluded it to Joseph, to whom they would have it to appear, that he never descended from. But, it is entirely evident, from both Matthew and Luke, from part of the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh verses thereof, that this genealogy refers entirely to Joseph, independent of Mary; for it is there exprest, “that Gabriel
“was sent from God, to a Virgin, espoused
“to a Man, whose name was Joseph, of the
“house of David; and the Virgin’s name was
“Mary,” without any reference to the Vir-
VOL. III. D

gin, from what tribe or family she was descended.

But, to what purpose was the tracing of Joseph's pedigree, to prove his being sprung of David's house, if Christ was not his Son? And if Christ was not the Son of Joseph, who is said to have been descended of David's line, according to the genealogies, what becomes then of all the different prophecies that speak of him as being made of the seed of David according to the flesh? Now, if Christ was not Joseph's son, all, for certain, what they call prophecies, must therefore, of necessity, go for naught, as an imposition upon the world, *viz.* the liberties and rights of mankind, as well as that of Moses's Pentateuch. For the tracing of Joseph's Pedigree, would have been nothing more, than making Joseph only a mock proof, if Christ was not his Son.

JUD. But does not all the prophets speak of him (*viz.* the Messiah,) as that he should be descended of David's line?

GEN. One thing you are there not apprized of: which is, what they call prophets, looked for him in a two-fold manner. Such, thereof, as expected his being a temporal prince, and that he should live and reign for ever, according to the received opinion of that people, always spoke of him, as that he should be descended of David's line or blood royal, and there sit upon his throne. But they who looked for him, as teaching a different system from that of Moses's, looked on him, as in Isa. liii. to which Christ himself re-

fers, that he should not only be despised, maltreated, and rejected of men; but, that he should likewise suffer, and be used in a most cruel manner, and be put to death for his doctrine, because different from that of Moses. But, in consideration of the above, one thing is certain, if Luke had meant to have traced up Christ's Pedigree, by the female line, Mary had, certainly, been named or exprest therein, by the Evangelist; but, to the contrary, no such person is exprest therein. But to proceed,

I shall therefore instance another difference, in what is exprest by Luke, and is as follows. Both Luke and Mark, tell us, that, "When Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, there met him, out of the city, a certain man which had devils long time, and wore no clothes, neither abode he in any house, but in the tombs." Matthew, who was present, and an eye-witness, says, "there met him two men, possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way." Mark and Luke, neither of whom being present, speak only of one; but Matthew, who was an eye-witness, calls them two: but, for two to become one, or one to become two, is impossible; but, whether we shall lay hold on that which is attested by an eye-witness, or at second hand, I shall leave to the unprejudiced reader to judge.

Hence, Luke tells us, in the above, that

Christ told them, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses; but what Luke expresses here, has not the smallest reference to Moses's law; for there is not one syllable, contained therein, that will support this reference.

Further, see also chap. xxii. 44. "And, being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it had been great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke, who had only what he wrote upon hearsay, or at second hand, says, that he sweated, as it were, great drops of blood; but, is what not one of them, who were present, maketh the least mention of: for all of them are agreed, that he went about a stone-cast distant from them, and then poured out his prayer to God. Now, since that not one of the disciples was present, at the place where Jesus prayed, how could any person know whether he sweated as it had been great drops of blood or not: for none of his disciples, who were next to the place where Jesus was, speaks one syllable of any such sweat. And besides all this, they were all fast asleep; therefore, incapable to perceive it. And not only this; but it was also dark; so that no person, though even present with him, could possibly have seen whether he sweated, (not to mention like drops of blood) while he was thus sorrowful, or not. For, though it was full moon, it appears from John xviii. 3. to have been quite dark; for he there tells us, who himself was present when Christ was apprehended by the

officers, the chief priests and pharasees, that they came thither, in search of him, with lanterns and torches; which proves it to have been dark.

Now, therefore, however pure what we have there related, and set before us in the gospels, may appear to us, it had, certainly, been infinitely more perfect still, and even void of all contradiction, if it had been wrote down from Christ's own mouth, the same as exprest by him to those, to whom he spake. But to return,

In proof of the uncertainty of Luke, it is generally allowed, that there were more than a dozen of gospels, some say many more, which were current, and stood on an equal footing of authority, for more than an hundred years after Christ's death; and that the canon was not settled till after that period. The above is what appears fully evident, and what is exprest in the above, is no more than what appears from the first verse, or preface to Luke's gospel; for he saith, "that many
" had taken in hand to set forth in or-
" der a declaration of those things which
" are most surely believed among us." That many had taken in hand, speaks expressly of different gospels having been wrote, perhaps, some of which, on hearsay, or at second hand; therefore, not at all to be sustained as authentic, though many truths might have been contained therein. Lastly, if any thing more occurs, in favour of Judaism, additional to your last, it is now high time that it be produced; therefore, I expect it in your next.

DIALOGUE V.

Next morning, breakfast being over, Judazer begins thus, I have been considering the contents of our last discourse, concerning the authority of Judaism; but your arguments being so conclusive, on that subject, I rather now (though not from choice) wish to leave off.

GEN. Since you have thus far agreed, to give up with what you formerly maintained of Judaism being divine, and if you will let truth be your motive, so as to comply with what is exprest by the apostle, (in confirmation of the gospel being taught, independent of Judaism) see Gal. v. 1. "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." The apostle is here addressing himself, in way of exhortation, not only to Jewish christians, alone; but likewise to all such as had been profelyted to Judaism, (before they became christian) who, though being freed by the gospel from the yoke of the ceremonial law, had suffered themselves to be subjected, and brought under the yoke of bondage thereto a second time, by the Judaizing teachers. And, in the next verse, he tells them expressly of their danger in perverting the gospel, by their mixing, and making it harmonize with Judaism, verse 2. "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."

Ceremonies were just, in every respect, as vain and unacceptable to God, as the money of Simon Magus, was, for purchasing the spirit of grace (to him, in order that he might thereby work miracles, and be admired of the populace); therefore, could neither profit, nor reap advantage therefrom, for their salvation.

Verſes 3, 4. "For I testify to every man
"that is circumciſed, that he is a debtor to
"do the whole law. Chriſt is become of no
"effect unto you, whoſoever of you are juſti-
"fied by the law (*viz.* the ceremonial); ye
"are fallen from grace."

Hence, they who repoſed their confidence in Moſes, *viz.* Judaiſm, could reap no benefit from their belief, in adhering to the goſpel, namely, ſuch, like thoſe, whom the apoſtle doth ſo ſharply reprove. That men would obtain the pardon of ſin, upon their repentance and turning unto God, independent of the ceremonial law, was a doctrine, that that perſidious race of men, *viz.* the Jews, but more eſpecially their prieſts, could, by no means, admit or diſpenſe with. For they imagined, that, by fulfilling the ritual or ceremonial law, they purchaſed the pardon of ſin; and thereby laid God under an obligation, to diſcharge the whole debt of ſin, which they had contracted, through the courſe of the paſt year. The ceremonial law was what ſupplied the place of repentance, under the Jewiſh œconomy, as believed by that people; which, no doubt, was a moſt damnable doctrine; but was altogether unprofitable, under the goſpel.

For where ever a price is paid, for the pardon or remission of sin, like that of the Jewish ceremonial law, or in whatever manner it will, there is no forgiveness. For a price is that which is not only contrary, but is diametrically opposite to the whole tenour of the gospel. The purport or meaning of the gospel, being this, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," viz. in the doctrine which he and his apostles taught, which was this, "repent and turn unto God, and ye shall be saved." Yea, all their iniquities, upon condition of their repentance and turning unto God, were forgiven freely, without fee or reward, without money and without price.

But to return, we may here learn, from the above, that the apostle Paul, who himself was bred up a Jew, and that of the strictest sect, a pharasee; and, though none of that people were better acquainted in the knowledge of that religion, than himself, he was, in every respect, as careful, when he taught and instructed the gentiles, in the knowledge of the gospel, to keep clear of making it harmonize with Judaism, as with the idol worship of the heathen nations. But to proceed,

Hence, there is nothing more evident, than what may be gathered in proof thereof, from his gentile epistles, when speaking to the gentiles, independent of the Jews, who, no doubt, were oft-times intermixed therewith, as they being scattered abroad among all the heathen nations.

JUD. I fairly grant of the apostle having

wrote the gospel in a different dress to the gentiles, than what he did to the Jews; but who knows, but what he may have taught the gentiles the knowledge and principles thereof, in a different dress, from that which he wrote to them, in their epistles.

GEN. I know, some have indeed most presumptuously alledged, that the apostle Paul taught the gentiles a different gospel, or mode of doctrine, from that which he wrote: but it would be highly absurd to imagine, that the apostle taught the gentiles one gospel or mode of doctrine, and wrote them another for the standards of their gentile churches, different from what he taught.

But, for proof that the apostle taught the gospel unto the gentiles, in no other dress than what he wrote, see Acts xx. 20, 21.

“ And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” “ Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;” faith, that is, a full confidence and belief, that what he had taught, was the pure and uncorrupted word of God. And to this he adds, verses 26, 27. “ Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” That God was willing to forgive

men their trespasses, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him, "in conforming their lives with whatever rules or duties are set before them in the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, that they, by complying therewith, might live in obedience to his will. The first thing here required, was repentance towards God; and the second, was to believe the authority of him that promised the reward, annexed thereto. Next, he tells them, that he was free from the blood of all men; because he had declared unto them, the whole counsel of God. In these there is no discord; but a perfect, full, and complete agreement, corroborating with all the different epistles, wrote out for standards to the gentile churches. And yet, though oft-times speaking to a promiscuous multitude, *viz.* Jews and Gentiles, he delivered his speech, not under one, but in two different dresses, in such a manner as was suitable to both Jews and gentiles.

JUD. The reason why that the gentiles were not instructed by the apostles, in the knowledge of the gospel, after the manner of the Mosaic institution, was; because of their being, not only strangers, but altogether ignorant, and unacquainted with Judaism.

GEN. That, for certain, will by no means hold, if we give credit to Paul's epistle to the Galatians; where he, though some time after their receiving the gospel, rather accuseth them for being, not only too well acquainted, but also condemns them for their complying

with it, contrary to what they, *viz.* the apostles, when met thereon at Jerusalem, had commanded. And thus he expresses himself, saying, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth." The Galatian Converts to Christianity, were, as appears evident by the apostle, in his accusing them for turning aside from the gospel, in being perverted from a just belief therein, by Jews and Judaizing teachers, with such as had formerly been proselytes of the gate; which had, not only complied with Judaism, but even persuaded others to believe therein. But further,

Now, instead of the gentiles being ignorant of Judaism; it is now perfectly evident, from the above, that Judaism, is what the gentile christians were, not only advised, but discharged against.

Now, since this is the case, let us therefore be aware against those who would blend, or make the gospel to harmonize with Judaism, as if the Christian religion depended upon it, for its authenticity. These, and such linssey woolsey teachers as these, are they, with whom, we, gentile christians, have nothing to do.

JUD. If the Mosaic system was not divine, the apostles ought to have taught the Jews, independent thereof, the same as they did the gentiles.

GEN. The apostles, in order to prevent the Jews from indulging their prejudices, against the doctrines of the gospel, when they in-

instructed them, *viz.* the Jews, in the knowledge thereof, made the different sacrifices and other appendages of the ceremonial law, and the gospel, to harmonize, and depend upon each other. But, when they instructed the gentiles in the knowledge of the gospel, they taught them a quite different doctrine, not only independent of Judaism, but strictly discharged them against it.

Hence, we see, from the above, that those who, from want of judgment are incapable to distinguish the one from the other, they, by reason of blending and making them to harmonize together, do, thereby, confound both to such a degree, that whoever adheres thereto, are neither Jews nor christians.

JUD. Did not the Jews receive the gospel, in as much purity as the gentiles?

GEN. That the gentiles received the gospel in its purity, and the Jews did not, is evident, from Acts xiii. 45. down to the end of said chapter; and likewise, chap. xviii. 6. "And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he, *viz.* Paul, shook his raiment, and said unto them, your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the gentiles." The above, with many other different texts as well as they, are only but a specimen of the whole.

When the apostles preached the gospel, which was, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (meaning the doctrines they taught in his name), and your iniquities shall be blotted out:" the Jews being so much bigoted to, and

prejudiced in favours of the Mosaic law, that the pardon of sin, upon their repentance and turning unto God, independent of said law, was, what they, *viz.* the Jews, could by no means dispense with: so that, when the apostle preached up the pardon of sin, independent thereof, they, with rage, began to blaspheme.

The apostle, therefore, seeing this, was laid under a necessity, of making the gospel and the ceremonial law, to harmonize together, the same as if they had depended upon each other; in order that they might thereby take off their prejudice, against receiving the gospel, and be reconciled to it. On the other hand, the gentiles, not only received the gospel without having the smallest degree of prejudice against it, but were happy therein. The gentiles, having therefore no prejudice against the gospel, received it in its purity; but the Jews, being prejudiced in favours of the ceremonial or Mosaic law, and against the gospel, the apostles were thereby obliged to make them both harmonize together, in order that they might swallow down the one, for the sake of the other. Thus, what the gentiles received in purity, the Jews, by reason of their prejudices, would not so much as accept of, without being corrupted as in the above. For, as exprest in Tacitus, who lays it down as an established maxim, that the secret of setting up a new state or a new religion, consists, in retaining the image of the old. Nor was this maxim unknown to Jesus Christ and his a-

postles. No: for in teaching the Jews, in the knowledge of the gospel, they (namely, his apostles) always made it harmonize with Judaism, *viz.* the ceremonial law, in referring thereto, and to which they were so much indulged, as if inseparable, and had depended thereon for its authority; though to the gentiles, always independent thereof.

Extract from COLLINS, on the Christian religion.

“ This method, of introducing christianity into the world, by building and grounding it on the Old Testament, is agreeable to the common method of introducing New revelations (whether real or pretended), or any changes in religion, and also to the nature of things. For, if we consider the various supposed revelations, and changes in religion, whereof we have any tolerable history, in their beginning, we shall find them, for the most part, to be grafted on some old stock; or founded on some preceding supposed revelations, which they were either to supply, or fulfil, or retrieve from corrupt glosses, innovations, and traditions, with which, by time, they were incumbered: and this, which may seem matter of surprize to those who do not reflect on the changeable state of all things, has happened; though the old revelations, far from intending any change, ingraftment, or new dispensation, did, for the most part, declare they were to last for ever: and did for-

bid all alterations and innovations, they being the last dispensation intended, or was to be looked for in the world. But to proceed,

This ingrafting on old stocks, we see by experience to be the case of all sects, which alike, and according to the natural course of things, rise up in the several great domineering religions of the world. Nor, is it less true of the domineering religions themselves; some of which, we know to have been originally, but such sects themselves. Thus, the pretended mission of Moses to the Israelites, supposed a former revelation of God (who, from the beginning, seems to have been constantly giving a succession of dispensations, and supposed, or rather pretended revelations) to their ancestors; and many of the religious precepts of Moses were borrowed, or had an agreement with the religious rites of the heathens, with whom the Israelites had correspondence; and particularly with the religious rites of the Egyptians, (who, upon that account, seem confounded with the Israelites by some Pagans, as both their religious rites were equally, and at the same time prohibited by others); to whose religious rites, the Israelites seem to have been conformists, during their abode in Egypt; not excepting Joseph himself, who, by his post in the administration of the government, his match with the priest or prince of On's daughter, made up by Pharaoh himself, his manner of swearing, his eating with the Egyptians, his practice of heathen divination, and above all, by his political conduct, seems

to have been a most true member of, and convert to the established church of Egypt.

And further, the mission of Zoroaster to the Persians, supposed the religion of the Magicians, which had been for many ages past, the ancient national religion of the Medes as well as Persians. And likewise, the mission of Mahomet, supposed christianity, as that did Judaism.

And the Siamese and Brachmans, both pretend, that they have had a succession of incarnate deities among them, who, at due distances of time, have brought new revelations from heaven, each succeeding and depending on the former; and that religion is to be carried on in that way for ever.

And further, if we consider the nature of things, we shall find, that it must be difficult, if not impossible to introduce among men (who, in all civilized countries, are bred up in the belief of some revealed religion) a revealed religion, wholly new, or such as has no reference to a preceding one: for that would be to combat all men, in too many respects, and not to proceed on a sufficient number of principles, necessary to be assented to, by those on whom the first impressions of a new religion are proposed to be made.

From hence, perfect novelty is a great, and oft-times a just exception to a religious institution; whereof religious sects of all kinds have been so sensible, that they have ever endeavoured to give themselves, in some manner or other, the greatest antiquity they well could,

and generally the utmost antiquity. Thus, after the above method, St. Luke says, "That God spake of the Redeemer, by the mouth of all his prophets, which have been since the world began." And also, St. Paul pretends to defend himself, and the christian religion, from the charge of novelty, such as, when he says, "After the way, which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets."

Further, according to the above method, in building thus upon prophecy as a principle, Jesus and his apostles had, as has been observed, the concurrence of all sects of religion among the Pagans, who universally built their religions on divination; and also, made a great part of their religion to lie in the practice of that art. They learned that art in schools, or under discipline, as the Jews did prophesying in the schools and colleges of the prophets; where the learned Dodwell says, the candidates for prophecy were taught the rules of divination, practised by the Pagans, who were skilled therein, and in possession of the art long before them. And thus (in analogy to the heathen diviners) there were great numbers of prophets among them; who not only in the most important affairs of government, civil and ecclesiastical; but also, in the discovery of lost goods, and telling fortunes, shewed their divine inspiration; and who were paid for it by those who consulted them,

either in victuals or money, or presents. Whereby the meanest person in Judea had the opportunity of having this miracle wrought for him, whenever he had occasion." COLLINS. But to return,

It is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that the gentiles were neither taught, nor received the gospel from the apostles, under a belief that the Mosaic system was of divine authority, more than the Alcoran, which had no existence till six hundred years after that period. Now, since that we, Gentile christians, have been taught and instructed in the knowledge of the gospel (by the apostles), independent of requiring a belief in Moses's institution, there is none of the sons of men: no, not of the whole human race has a right to require it for them. Yea; I repeat it again, that since we, Gentile christians, were taught and instructed, and have received the gospel, from the apostles, independent of a belief in Judaism or Mosaic system, there is none of the sons of men: no, not of the whole human race has a right to require any such belief from us.

JUD. But, though that Paul, and the rest of the apostles, preached the gospel to the gentiles, independent of Judaism or Mosaic system, since he, *viz.* Paul, became all things to all men, he may only have delivered the gospel to the gentiles, separate from, or independent of Moses; lest they, *viz.* the gentiles, should have been offended thereat; and thereby have been prevented from receiving it:

for the gentiles had, in every degree, as little respect for Judaism, as the Jews had for Gentilism.

GEN. In answer to your objection in favours of Judaism, we see from the first of the Galatians, that there is a curse threatened against whoever should take upon them to join, or intermix judaism with the gospel; but there was no curse threatened against such as preached the gospel to the Jews, independent of Judaism; or against the Jews for receiving the gospel, independent thereof.

Now, from this, it is here evident, that all you have advanced in favours of Judaism, or of the gospel depending thereupon, must all go for nothing. Now, since the gentiles, as observed before, were not only taught, but received the gospel from the apostles, independent of the Mosaic system, there is none, no, not of the whole human race, has a right to require the smallest belief thereof, from their posterity.

Hence, if you should, therefore, maintain, that what was wrote to the Jews, in making Moses harmonize with the gospel, was intended for the use of the gentiles, as well as the Jews, you may just as well maintain, that, when Paul circumcised Timothy, and also that when he purchased sacrifices, and fulfilled the whole ceremonial law, according to the said statute, (in order that he might please the Jews, and thereby soften and take off their prejudice, which they had contracted against

receiving the gospel), that the whole performance thereof, was intended for the use of the gentile christians, as well as those of the Jews. Whoever takes upon them to maintain the one, may just as well, in every respect, maintain the other: for the one is no more false; but is just, in every degree, as gross and absurd as the other.

JUD. That Paul circumcised Timothy, according to your observation, and purchased sacrifices to fulfil the ceremonial law, contrary to what he taught, proves him to have been a great dissembler.

GEN. In answer to your objection, when Paul (after all things were made lawful for food) saith, If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth. And also, when he circumcised Timothy (after this rite was abolished) for fear lest he should interrupt the progress of the gospel taking place among the Jews, his countrymen; was this dissimulation, when done, in order to deliver them from a state of bondage, to a state of freedom? If it was, it was certainly out of a most glorious design, and for one of the best of purposes. I repeat it again, that, since there was nothing real in the literal fact, of Paul's circumcising Timothy, when after the ceremony was abolished; but only to take off the disgust, and remove the prejudice from that people, which they had contracted against their receiving the gospel, we may very justly suppose ten thousand times less, in that which was figuratively express, to

quiet, and reconcile the minds of the people in favours of the gospel. For we all very well know, that Paul intended nothing in the circumcision of Timothy; but that which is meant in the above: for he saith expressly, when speaking elsewhere upon this head, “for if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” For which, see Gal. ii. 18.

Now, since the gospel has been delivered, in such an ample manner to the gentiles, independent of Judaism, by the determination of the Apostolic Synod, met at Jerusalem (as has been observed elsewhere); and they, *viz.* the Gentiles, never after subjected thereto, neither by the whole, nor any one particular member of that Assembly; since this is the case, let us, therefore, be aware against being ensnared, lest of our being brought into bondage, by such as are bastards and not sons, whose ambition is not only to lord over; but subject to their dominion and slavery, the souls and consciences of men. But further,

Now, since a belief in Moses's, or Mosaic system, was never required of us by the apostles, let us, therefore, as men, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

Hence, though the gentiles were instructed in the knowledge of the gospel, by the apostles, independent of Judaism, they, *viz.* the apostles, were under a necessity, when they instructed the Jews, their country-men, in

making the gospel harmonize with almost every particular contained in their religion, lest they should have been disgusted, and prejudiced against it; and thereby, had prevented their falling in, and complying therewith. This, when properly understood, is no more than what is evident, to every unprejudiced mind and person of judgment.

JUD. Though the ceremonial law was abolished, in such a manner as not being taught the gentiles, that says nothing against its being of divine institution; for almost all Christendom holds it to have been typical of Christ.

GEN. If it had been typical of Christ, as generally understood and taught by you, Judaizers, the gentiles had just as certainly been acquainted in the knowledge thereof, by the apostles, as the Jews themselves: but of this, there is not one syllable to be found in proof thereof, in all the gentile epistles; but what is only wrote to the Jews, who were scattered abroad, promiscuously, among the gentiles, throughout almost all the gentile nations.

JUD. But the apostle nowhere saith, that the Mosaic system was not of divine institution.

GEN. Though he does not flatly express it so, when he tells us that it was a burden, that neither they nor their fathers were able to bear; and also styles it under the epithet of weak and beggarly elements, it implies, in every respect, just as much as they had told us expressly of its not being divine. For,

if the ceremonial law had either come from, or been given by God, would ever the apostle Paul have understood, or exprest it by the name of weak and beggarly elements? No: For there is nothing that is either weak or beggarly, can possibly come from God, or be required by him.

JUD. That is only when speaking to the gentiles; but never exprest so to the Jews.

GEN. The reason why of its not being exprest to the Jews, is, for fear of their giving offence.

JUD. Were they afraid of telling the truth? If this was the case, it would have shewn them being partial; but though exprest under such terms, this never hinders its having come from God.

GEN. Is it possible that either a law, or yet a religion, that neither their fathers nor they were able to bear, could come from, or be required by God? No, not possible: for this would be to put God in the place of a tyrant, and not of a good Sovereign.

JUD. Do you admit of no part of the Mosaic system to have been of divine appointment?

GEN. Yes; so far as conformable to the law and religion of nature, it certainly is; but no farther. And whatever is agreeable thereto, it is not because contained in Moses's institution, more than any other system that makes it divine. No: for whatever is one with the law and religion of nature, is from God, by whomsoever it either came or is found: and also, in whatever part, or age of

the world it takes place. But, whatever does not correspond therewith, though all the human race would ascribe the authority thereof to God to establish its authenticity, can never possibly be from him.

JUD. By this, you thereby refuse scripture to be divine.

GEN. Whatever is of a piece with the above, I heartily admit; and whatever is opposite thereto, I reject.

JUD. Do you know what it is to misbelieve scripture?

GEN. Whatever is agreeable to the above, carries conviction along with it; neither will it misbelieve for you: but whatever is contrary thereto, can never possibly be received as divine, nor be believed by any, but the ignorant, and unthinking croud, to whom there is nothing can be so gross, false, or absurd, (if once canonized by superstitious priests), but what they will believe and receive as divine. And, when nothing is found therein suitable to the above test, they, to terrify the simple, send forth volleys of anathemas: threatening every one with a double portion of inevitable damnation, that doubts, and will neither believe nor receive it.

JUD. All that the clergy requires of you to believe, ought to be received as divine.

GEN. If this be the case, we may then bid adieu to the gospel, and every thing that is divine.

JUD. Do you actually suppose so?

GEN. They who understand the gospel as

being only a republication of the law and religion of nature, admit of nothing being divine and from God, but what is suitable thereto, and of a piece with himself; but they who hold the gospel or christian religion, as manufactured by priests, there is nothing can possibly be so gross, false, or unjust, ingrafted thereon, by ignorant, self-interested and designing men, but what they will ascribe the authority thereof unto God, as divine. And, in confirmation of the above, it is to be remarked, that, in whatever morals the gentile christians were instructed by the apostles, for their behaviour and regulation in life, suitable to Moses's laws, they never ascribed the authority thereof to Moses. No; but taught the same, independent thereof, as from God, conformable to the gospel, and inseparable from the christian life; answerable to what Christ himself both taught and commanded us, for our acceptance with God.

JUD. Is it not exprest by Christ, Matth. v. 17. That he came "not to destroy the law and the prophets; but to fulfil?"

GEN. Yes.

JUD. How then is it said, that the ceremonial law is destroyed, and become of none effect? if the ceremonial law is destroyed, it certainly is not according to the above.

GEN. When Christ told that he was not come to destroy the law and the prophets; but to fulfil, the meaning thereof, is, that he came not to destroy whatever part thereof was answerable, and of a piece with the law

and religion of nature, originally given by God to man in his first formation. And as for the ceremonial law, there is not one syllable thereof mentioned in this place, which, no doubt, implies as much as of its not being from God: for he saith expressly, verse 18. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Till time shall be at an end.

JUD. Christ, answerable thereto, fulfilled the ceremonial law, in his death.

GEN. That is what will by no means hold, as to have the smallest reference thereto; as is evident, from the following 19 verse, "Who-soever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." If the ceremonial law had been meant, as supposed by you, Judaizer, the apostles, in setting it aside, would, according to the above, instead of being greatest, have been least in the kingdom of heaven. But the law here meant, is that which is moral, and will be of indispensable obligation, till time shall be no more.

DIALOGUE VI.

JUD. Having, therefore, impartially considered the weight of your last arguments and proofs, drawn from the New Testament, against Judaism, and of blending the gospel

therewith, in making them harmonize together, in showing the authority of the one to have depended upon the other, I am therefore no longer able to maintain my ground, nor defend my cause against your attacks.

GEN. I have used no other weapons, in my attack, or charge made on you, than what I am purely furnished with from the gospel.

JUD. All that I here ask is only this, that you would admit of Moses's system being divine.

GEN. If I should admit thereof, both conscience and the gospel, in which our ancient ancestors were taught by the apostles, would not only reprove; but would even testify against, and also join together to accuse, and thereby condemn me before God, for admitting thereof. Now, whether it be right to obey God or man, judge ye.

And as for your not being able to resist, nor withstand my arguments; it certainly bears along with it the aspect of a bad cause, when it will neither support itself, nor be defended by such a powerful chieftain, as Mr. Judaizer. But, in proof of what has been advanced, in confirmation of this subject being no vain assertion, I shall here beg your attention to what yet remains, in manifestation of our former discourse (upon that topic); and then refer you to the premises, which will better enable you to draw your conclusion.

And to proceed, I apprehend, there is nothing more obvious, than what may be un-

derstood, not only from what has been already advanced; but also from what follows. How that, by virtue of your blending the ceremonial law with the gospel, in making both thereof harmonize together, as if the validity of the one (*viz.* the gospel) depended upon the accomplishment of the other, you have thereby, according to St. Paul, made the gospel to become of none effect: as is evident from Gal. i 6,—12. “ I marvel that ye are so soon
“ removed from him that called you into the
“ grace of Christ into another gospel: Which
“ is not another; but there be some that
“ trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel
“ unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we
“ said before, so say I now again, If any man
“ preach any other gospel unto you than that
“ ye have received, let him be accursed. For
“ do I persuade men, or God? or do I seek
“ to please men? for if I yet pleased men,
“ I should not be the servant of Christ. But
“ I certify you, brethren, that the gospel
“ which was preached of me is not after man.
“ For I neither received it of man, neither
“ was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus
“ Christ.”

From hence, there is nothing more manifest, than what is here exprest in the above, that whoever took upon them to blend the gospel with Judaism, in making it harmonize therewith, do, in fact, subject themselves to

the curses pronounced therein by the apostle, against all such teachers. Nor did the apostle receive this gospel from man, in which the gentiles were taught, independent of Judaism or Mosaic system, or was it of himself, and not from God. No: for he saith expressly, he did not receive it of man; but was taught it by revelation of Jesus Christ.

Hence, it is, therefore, now evident, that all teachers whatever; who make the gospel and Mosaic system harmonize together, as if the one depended upon the other; and likewise require a belief therein, from them that hear them, do, in effect, serve themselves heirs to that curse pronounced by St. Paul, against all such teachers whatever, who corrupt that gospel, which he received of Jesus Christ, by mingling it with Judaism: so that, by their making it to harmonize with Moses, or Mosaic system, do thereby make it become a mere medley, neither Jewish nor Christian.

JUD. But though the gentiles were taught the gospel by the apostles, independent of Judaism, that by no means hinders both thereof, from being made to harmonize together, in after ages; that every one may receive it, either simple or compound, as they find themselves disposed to accept thereof.

GEN. To blend the gospel with Judaism, is to take Moses's old materials, to intermix with the precious stones of Christ's house. And thus, by mixing the precious stones of the gospel, with Moses's old temporary bricks of the Arabian Pile, in building up the New

Testament church, ye, through the insufficiency of these materials, have buried the gospel of Christ in the ruins thereof. So that, whoever would enjoy the gospel in its purity, must, therefore, be at the expence of digging it up from among the ruins of that useless rubbish, under which it hath been so long buried, by you, Judaizers:—For the recovering the gospel from among the ruins thereof, is, in reality, next to a resurrection thereto, or life from the dead.

For, to believe that works, *viz.* ceremony, such as contained in the Mosaic system, *viz.* Judaism, will bring us into heaven, independent of repentance and turning unto God, is not only a dangerous, but a damnable doctrine. And, to believe, like the Jewish christians, that it was necessary to retain Judaism or Mosaic system (as well as the christian), in order to bring them into favour with God, is to render the gospel, or Christian religion (*viz.* their repentance and turning unto God for the pardon of sin) insufficient for salvation. Hence, all such are only mongrel christians; therefore, can never possibly profit by the gospel.

Thus, for men to lay stress on any thing else for the pardon of sin, than that of repentance and turning unto God, is to render the gospel of none effect; altogether useless and unprofitable for the salvation of men.

JUD. Since men have so long reposed their confidence in the Mosaic system, *viz.* Judaism,

in making it harmonize with the gospel, why ought they to mistrust it now?

GEN. It appears from your argument, that the stress of your religion, lies in its antiquity, and not in its quality; but I tell you of a truth, that one may just as well retire to a pest-house for safety, as a preservative against the infection; as, to look for either perfection or purity in our religion, till once expunged of the Jewish or Mosaic system. For so long as the one is made to harmonize with the other, a mongrel religion (*viz.* that which is neither Jewish nor christian), of necessity, will exist. For, it is, in every respect, as absurd to imagine, that our religion can be pure, while blended with Judaism; as to believe that nature can exist of itself, independent of God.

JUD. In your rejecting the Mosaic institution being divine, you do not only reject Judaism, but even the most capital doctrines, handed down to us by our reformers, *viz.* that of Calvinism.

GEN. The Calvinistical scheme or system, adopted by a great many Protestants, is only that which may be understood an image of the second beast, mentioned in the Revelation, which derived its power from the first; that is, by taking up the meaning of the New Testament, in a quite different light than what it was intended by Christ and his apostles; so that, by their blending the gospel with Judaism, in making them to harmonize together, as if the one depended upon the other, they

have thereby converted the christian religion into that which is only a mongrel, neither Jewish nor christian: and therefore, is now, in every respect, as far from the nature and true meaning of the gospel, wherein the gentiles were at first taught and instructed in by the apostles, as from the Alcoran itself. For the gospel has no more relation to Judaism, or dependence on the Mosaic system, than upon the Alcoran: for the christian religion was intended and set up for a quite different purpose, not only in order to overturn Judaism; but every other system, of like nature, in which there is no salvation. For although this great Champion for reformation (*viz.* Calvin), protested against, and gave up with the ceremonial part of Popery, he retained her doctrines, and the most savage part of all her principles, *viz.* that of persecution, in putting people to death, who differed in sentiment from himself, and refused to comply therewith. For heaven is no more opposite to hell, than what Calvin acted opposite to the spirit of the gospel (taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles), in the death of Servetus. And yet, after all, this is the man who is stiled the Great Reformer by his followers, who are only of a mongrel religion, neither Gentiles, Jews, nor Christians.

JUD. That of persecution, in burning heretics, and putting people to death for speculative opinions, I fairly acknowledge, is, certainly, a most damnable and blackguard doctrine!

GEN. To that I heartily agree; but black as it is, there are some of the different sectaries, in our own nation, who call themselves protestants, if not prevented by the power of the civil magistrate, would persecute with as much violence as ever. One of which (with whom I one time chanced to be in company), who pretended to be a student of their divinity; he, in discoursing on that subject, had the presumption to borrow the authority of the New Testament, to prove the legality of that very doctrine.

JUD. You have certainly misunderstood his profession; for he may well have been a student of the devil, but not of divinity: for heaven is no more opposite to hell, than what persecution is to the gospel, and the gospel is to persecution.

GEN. I, in return, (but not without smartness), told him expressly, that he and all of such principles, were infinitely below the brutes that perish, in borrowing the authority of the gospel, in proof of such a hellish doctrine.

JUD. Persecution for speculative opinions, is not only destructive, but even a disgrace to every society under heaven, but that of devils. And there is none of the human race, that are of such a spirit, but what, in reality, are members of their society.

GEN. That is certainly a truth.

JUD. If such beings exist, as what they call salamanders: persecutors are certainly them that

breed, and come forth from hell, or that lake which is said to burn for ever and ever: For of all heresies under heaven, that of persecution, is, certainly, the greatest, and deserves being put to death; for they are not only pests, but incendiaries to the destruction of all society.

GEN. No: let them alone, peradventure they see, and may be convinced of the evil thereof; and repent, that they may be forgiven, before they go hence and be no more. For it is soon enough for such despicable wretches to be thrown into hell, when turned thereinto by Almighty God.

JUD. But, though we make the Mosaic system to harmonize with Judaism; in this, we strengthen the gospel.

GEN. Whatever systems (such as that of Moses and the like) you Calvinists and Judaizing teachers, do add to the gospel, in order to strengthen, or in support thereof, you, in reality, do thereby lessen and take from it. For there is nothing can admit of addition; but that which is wanting: for no addition can possibly be made to that which is perfectly complete, such as that of the gospel, without being hurtful thereto. Hence, it is, therefore, now evident, that whoever shall presume to take upon them, to add, in the smallest degree, to the gospel system, may justly be supposed its greatest enemies; because every addition of whatever kind, implies a defect or imperfection in that, to which it is applied. For to require the belief of any thing having been immediately given, or delivered by God for

our salvation, independent of our New Testament, is to weaken the validity of the gospel; as if what is contained therein, were insufficient to teach us the will of God for our salvation.

Now, if any person shall accuse, or be guilty in condemning us, Gentile christians, for rejecting Moses, our answer is, that we were discharged by the apostles themselves, against Judaism, or the Mosaic system; and a belief therein, was never again required of us; neither by the apostles, nor by their authority. From hence, since our early ancestors, the gentiles, were not only instructed in the gospel by the apostles, independent of Judaism; but were also discharged against receiving it: whoever, therefore, shall pretend to teach and require of us, contrary to their instructions, the belief of Moses's system, being of divine authority, and that we should receive it as such, and intermix it with the gospel, these are only what are called in the New Testament, Judaizing teachers (or mongrel christians). Now, since the gentiles were taught and instructed in the knowledge of the gospel by the apostles, altogether independent of the Mosaic system; and that a belief therein was never again required of them by the apostles, there was never yet one of the human race since, had authority from God, to enjoin the gentiles, in after ages, to any such belief, though falsely imposed upon them by you, Judaizers.

JUD. Though the gentiles were taught the gospel, independent of the Mosaic system, you

very well know, that, when the apostles taught the Jews in the knowledge thereof, *viz.* the gospel, they always made it to harmonize with Judaism.

GEN. Yes; when the apostles taught the Jews in the knowledge thereof, they, no doubt, made the gospel to harmonize with the Mo-
saic system, or what they call Judaism, in order that they, *viz.* the Jews, might be reconciled thereto; but, on the other hand, when they instructed the gentiles in the knowledge thereof, they did not only discharge them against Judaism; but also, as has been observed, threatened the teachers thereof with a curse, if they, in the least, did either intermix, or make the one to harmonize with the other, as to have the smallest relation or reference thereto. But, there was no such restraint laid upon the Jews, against their receiving the gospel, independent of Judaism. Yea; I repeat it again, though there was a curse pronounced against such teachers, who took upon them to make the gospel harmonize with Judaism, in teaching the gentiles, in order that they might pervert the truth; which they, *viz.* the gentiles, had received from the apostles; yet, there was no curse threatened against such as took upon them to instruct the Jews, in the knowledge of the gospel, independent of Judaism. This, I do not only require of you, Judaizer, and Jewish christians; but also, from all Christendom itself, to shew me so much as one single proof to the contrary, from the whole New Testament.

JUD. Since the gentiles were in the right, who rejected Moses, and received the gospel, independent of Judaism, why does the apostle Paul come to accuse them of foolishness?

GEN. The reason why the apostle accused the gentiles of foolishness, was not upon account of there rejecting Moses. No; But for adhering to the Judaizing teachers (who blended the gospel with Judaism), contrary to what he had commanded: for he says, Gal. iii. 1. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" "Hath been evidently set forth," to deliver men from trusting to such lying vanities, as that of the Jewish or ceremonial law, "crucified among you" Christ is here represented to the gentiles, by the apostle, as having died in confirmation of the doctrine he taught; which was, "repent and turn unto God, and your iniquity shall be blotted out:" certifying to the world, that sacrifices, and every other ceremony of like nature, were altogether vain and unprofitable, to restore the sinner into favour with God; but that of repentance and turning unto him, by walking agreeable to his will.

The whole chain of the apostles reasoning, declares expressly, that, whatever was added to the above doctrine, did, in reality, make the gospel of none effect. It is, therefore, now evident, that the doctrine taught by these Judaizers, was the very height of folly. 'Tis

to be remarked, that those among the Galatians (as well as other gentiles), whom the apostle Paul accuseth of foolishness, and that were bewitched by the Judaizing teachers to fall in with Judaism, or Mosaic institution, were only such as had been proselytes thereto, before they became christian. This is no more than what appears evident, from their being acquaint with the different rites, contained in that religious system of Jewish superstition. To this we may add, what is there exprest in the first epistle of Peter, that, when he is speaking to the gentiles in his first general epistle, (wrote to the Jews, his own country-men); and likewise the rest of the apostles, when sometimes speaking thereof, is always meant of such as had aforetime been proselyted to Judaism; which is abundantly evident from Acts xiii. 43.

JUD. But, though we make the gospel, and Mosaic system harmonize together, you can by no means refuse of us being christians.

GEN. You, in so doing, have no more right to the name, christian, more than what a mule has to an horse: the claims of both are equal, by reason of there being gendred betwixt two different species, *viz.* animals, and religions do thereby partake of both, according to their natures. For there is no person whatever, can possibly make the gospel and Judaism harmonize together, in the instructing of gentile christians; but what do, as observed, inevitably make themselves liable to the curses, pronounced by St. Paul, against the Judaizing

teachers. And, though such should imagine that they are preaching against Judaism, or Judaizing teachers; yet they themselves, by holding such doctrines, are the very persons against whom they do speak. Yea: I repeat it again, though such should imagine that they are preaching against Judaism, or the Judaizing teachers; yet they themselves, by holding such doctrines, are the very persons against whom they do speak; therefore, liable to the curses pronounced against them, and all such teachers.

JUD. You must, therefore, be aware against rejecting Moses: for if you do, you will be counted a deist.

GEN. If the rejecting a belief of what was never required of us, either by Christ or his apostles, but discharged by them against receiving it, be deism, I cannot refuse the epithet: but, since that neither Christ nor his apostles required such a belief of us, there is none, no, not of the whole human race, has a right to require it for them. And, though I should reject both Moses and Mahomet being divine; If I hold that Jesus Christ and his apostles (who discharged us against Moses), taught men the will of God for their salvation, I am no deist: for, since we were discharged by the apostles against receiving Moses, we have, in every respect, as good a right to accuse you for deists, for rejecting Mahomet and his Alcoran, against which you were never discharged, as what you have to accuse us. For though neither Mahomet nor his law, did

then exist, he, for certain, was a worshipper of the true God, as well as Moses.

JUD. But, if you reject such parts of the New Testament, as refers to Moses, they will refuse of you being a christian.

GEN. Although that our modern christians, who hold the Mosaic institution to be divine, should exclaim against us, saying, that we are no christians, because we reject Moses, it is only such as reject him, that have a right to be called christians. For it was only the Grecians or gentile converts at Antioch, who rejected Moses, to whom the name christian was first given: for it is said, Acts xi. 26. "that they were called christians first at Antioch." It is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that such as hold by Moses, are not true; but are only, what may be called mongrel or Mosaic Christians, like such of the Jews who believed their great deliverer was come, and yet held the authority of Moses. For whoever holds the divine authority of any other system, but that of the gospel, they are not true, but mongrel christians; therefore, not of the true church of Christ: by which means, you have ten thousand times better right to refuse of them being christians, than what they falsely apply the epithet of deist to you.

Hence, it is, therefore, now no great wonder, to see the populace, and such as are patrons for superstition, exclaim and cry out against men, for attacking, and exposing the different innovations and corruptions, ingraft-

ed on our religion, in making it harmonize with Judaism, which is only the basis and pillar of the Romish church, when we see, in what manner the apostle Paul himself was attacked, and maltreated by the Jews, his own country-men, for speaking against their bigoted superstition; which was held by that people, not only sacred, but divine. For proof thereof, see Acts xxi. 20, 21, 27, 28. "Thou
"seest, brother, how many thousands of
"Jews there are, which believe; and they
"are all zealous of the law: and they are in-
"formed of thee, that thou teachest all the
"Jews which are among the gentiles to for-
"sake Moses, saying, that they ought not to cir-
"cumcise their children, neither to walk af-
"ter the customs. When the Jews, there-
"fore, saw him in the temple, they stirred up
"all the people, and laid hands on him, cry-
"ing out, men of Israel, help: this is the
"man that teacheth all men every where a-
"gainst the people, and the law, and this
"place." For such as were bred up under the Mosaic system, and had embraced the gospel, could not endure to hear the apostle preach the gospel, independent of Judaism.

Now, therefore, do not we join with the apostle, in accusing the Jews, and Judaizing teachers, for the opposition he met with from them, in preaching the gospel? Certainly. Hence, since we join with the apostle, in the condemnation of the Jews, and Judaizing teachers, why, therefore, do we, christians, accuse and condemn the Jews for being offend-

ed at the apostles, for abolishing Judaism, when we, gentile christians, who are not only discharged against Judaism, but are also threatened with a curse against receiving it, are offended at such as reject Moses, according to the apostles commandment? we, in reality, do thereby condemn the Jews, for that which we ourselves are guilty of; but in this, we do not only accuse the Jews alone. No: for whatever we pronounce against the Jews, in condemning the apostle (we being in every respect as guilty as they,) is, in reality, the sentence of our own condemnation.

JUD. You speak of the gospel, when blended with Moses, as being nothing more than a corrupted mass.

GEN. The gospel or christian religion, when stripped of the different corruptions ingrafted thereon, by ignorant, self interested, and designing men, is what I do not only esteem, but highly revere; but, however agreeable, when divested thereof, is, in every respect, as detestable, when blended with Judaism, and other corrupt doctrines of priests and Judaizing teachers.

JUD. Take care, that, in abolishing Moses, you do not infringe the gospel, by which we are taught the will of God.

GEN. Since that the apostles assured the first gentile christians of heaven, independent of Judaism, we, their successors, need not be afraid of being disappointed thereof (if we live agreeable to the duties contained in the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ for our salvation), by

refusing Moses's system, being of divine authority. No: for the gentiles were instructed by the apostles in the knowledge of the gospel, in every respect, as independent of the Mosaic system, as of the Alcoran itself.

JUD. It appears, I must, therefore, now leave you where I found you.

GEN. Yes; for you have God's authority, to give up with your's, and come over to us; but we have no authority to come over to you.

Hence, the Mosaic system was, no doubt, a mere external service, calculated only for this present life, independent of another: for it, in no where, pointed, in the smallest respect, towards a future state. The rewards and punishments, annexed to every action in life, contained therein, are altogether external, independent of an internal, or that which is to come; yet morals (though unknown to that system), when rising from the internal principles of the mind, can never possibly miss their reward, either in this life, or in that which is to come, and oft-times in both; but the Jews, according to their leader, commonly placed their happiness in this present, independent of a future.

JUD. But, why does the apostle Paul set forth the Jews (who were no idolaters, but worshippers of the true God) in such a light, as being as needful of being saved by the gospel, as the gentiles.

GEN. The reason why the apostle represents the Jews, in every respect, as needful of being saved by the mercy of God as the gentiles,

was, to show them the invalidity of Judaism, or ceremonial law (in which they reposed their confidence); and the vanity of trusting thereto, or to any thing else, but the pardon and forgiveness of sin, as offered in the gospel by Jesus Christ and his apostles, by their repentance and turning unto God, in living in obedience to his will.

JUD. Why did not Christ, when he chose his disciples, chuse them from among the priests the sons of Levi, who ministered, by divine appointment, in the Jewish church?

GEN. The reasons, why he did not chuse them from among these consecrated gentlemen, are different, and are as follows.

The first was to show his dislike at such a scene of arrant villany, as had been falsely claimed, and carried on by that tribe, for so many ages past, under a pretended sanction of God's authority. The second was, that his was a new religion, to be set up by the direction of God's spirit, not only to overturn, but for the destruction of their's, to which they were so much bigoted. Third, that a true reformation in the doctrine of religion, is not to be expected to begin at the priests: for what they give out for reformation, is, commonly, a greater degree of corruption for propagating of sectaries. Fourth, if the priests, or Levites (of which race you Judaizers are), had been concerned therein, they would (like you) have blended the one with the other; and thereby confounded the gospel as to become of none effect. The fifth and last thereof;

God, oft-times, in order to show his power, brings about the greatest events, by means of the smallest instruments; that he may thereby testify of the accomplishment thereof, being executed only at his command.

Further, it is to be remarked, that, when Christ made choice of his apostles, some thereof were fishers, to whom he promised, that, in following him, he would make them become fishers of men. Answerable to which promise, when they came to fish the Jews, their own country-men, they very well knew, that the only favourite bait, with which they could possibly dress up the hook, for catching of that people, was the Mosaic or ceremonial law; to which, above all others, they were so much bigoted. So that, by dressing up the hook of the gospel therewith, they, according to St. Paul, being crafty, caught them with guile.

JUD. Why did the apostle use guile, in teaching the gospel?

GEN. Only, in order to undeceive, and deliver mankind from Jewish and gentile superstition, that, being released from its deceit, each thereof might enjoy a true and equitable knowledge of God; and be set at liberty from the religious frauds of a mistaken devotion. But to proceed,

The Jewish religion, instead of being a mean of diffusing the knowledge of the true God among the nations, seems rather calculated to bring it into dislike, among every people who were not acquainted, but ignorant thereof. For

the Jews were actually taught, by their religion, to believe that God hated all mankind, but themselves alone; therefore, supposed that those whom God hated, could not possibly be too cruelly dealt with; and that such treatment would, no doubt, be thought most pleasing and acceptable to him. For, whether people believed in the true, or in the false gods, if they did not hold and comply with the superstitious reveries of that people (which were sufficiently gross to have been paid to a metal or wooden deity), it was, in every respect, as dangerous for them to live beside such a savage race of mankind, as in the neighbourhood of the most rapacious animals, who live on nothing else than blood and carnage. For they had just about as much respect to the lives of those of other nations, as foxes have for sheep; or butchers, for that of a fatted ox. So that, instead of the Mosaic institution giving a check to the idolatries of the heathen nations, for which it is said to have been intended, it rather had a quite different effect: for that people, above all others, were inspired with the most cruel sentiments for the rest of mankind; and fathered upon their God, greater barbarities, than, perhaps, ever were practised, either before or since, by any people under heaven.

Now, therefore, however much you, Judaizing teachers, who blend, and make the gospel and Mosaic system harmonize together, may study to blind yourselves and others, from perceiving that curse, pronounced by

the apostle Paul against you, and such as adhere to your mongrel doctrines, do not ye, therefore, deceive yourselves; for though you may think to escape what is pronounced against you, by the apostle, in the above quotation, be assured of it, it, for certain, if delivered by the command of God, will cleave fast unto you, either in this life, or in that which is to come.

JUD. Do not you, therefore, by rejecting Moses, make yourself liable to what is there exprest by John, in the last of the Revelation, of your name being taken away from out of the book of life?

GEN. What is there exprest by John, or writer of that book, includes no more than what is contained in the Revelation, alone, independent of any other book, called scripture.

JUD. It surely includes both the Old and New Testaments; for almost all christians believe it so.

GEN. It is only your gross ignorance, that causeth you to speak so: for if you would read the 15. and 21. chapters of the Acts, you would there see, if true, according to you, Judaizer, that both John himself, and the rest of the apostles, have made themselves liable thereto, in their abolishing of Judaism to the gentile christians; and I, myself, tenaciously adhere to their determination. But, one may just as well search a bramble bush, for a main-mast to a first rate man of war; as take upon them to teach the populace, either truth or understanding, that they may believe and receive it;

or yet, as to convince them of their mistake, while chained down by priests, or Judaizing teachers.

JUD. But you know, that, if you disobey the priests, they will cut you off from every privilege you enjoy under the gospel.

GEN. If I do not cut off myself therefrom, by immoral actions, they cannot: for I have as good a right to serve myself thereof, as of being served by them: for, in the law and religion of nature, every man, so long as they acted agreeable thereto, was prophet, priest, and king, in his own family. But this law and religion of nature, being not only corrupted, but was almost altogether defaced, through the cunning and artifice of priests. Pure and undefiled religion, having now suffered, as in the above; Christ, therefore, came on purpose, not only to revise, but also to illustrate the same, in opening up, and showing the perfection thereof, in its just and proper light; and has thereby transferred the same to us, though corrupted by Judaizing teachers. For the duties contained in the gospel, are an express transcript of that indispensable law and religion of nature, republished and taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, for the good of men.

But the religion of nature, was no sooner restored to its ancient purity, by Jesus Christ, than corrupted again, by priests and Judaizing teachers. Priests are they who have, in all ages, been the very engines of mischief, to religion: for it was only by virtue of these con-

fecrated gentlemen, that natural religion was first corrupted: nor did it stop here. No: for it was by virtue of these very gentlemen, *viz.* priests, that the republication thereof (taught by Jesus Christ) was corrupted also.

Hence, I would to God, that the adulterations of these gentlemen, *viz.* priests, had died with themselves; but this they did not: for it is by that very craft, that the corruptions thereof, have been handed down, and conveyed to us; and not only this, but our religion will be corrupted, so long as governed by these consecrated gentlemen. There are, no doubt, many good and great men, in the protestant churches; but such men are altogether overborne by the adulterous, and bastard breed of the great whore, *viz.* the Jesuitical and Judaizing teachers, who are enemies to all true religion, whether natural or revealed.

Now, let us, therefore, exert ourselves for the sake of that which is divine; and knock off these chains, of priestly ambition, wherewith the powers of judgment, given by and received from God, have been so long fettered down. For the gospel is free to all men, yea; to the whole human race without exception, that are pleased to accept thereof; and no man, under heaven, has a right from God, either to with-hold, or bind it up from another. For every man who maketh it his study to live agreeable to the duties, contained therein, has not only a right thereto, but also to serve himself, if necessary, of every privilege con-

tained therein: for it is exprest elfewhere, by the prophet, when fpeaking with an eye towards the gofpel, of men being freed by the power thereof, from under the dominion of prietly ambition, that, in the latter days, they fhall be all taught of God, even from the leaft thereof to the greateft; that is, each thereof, fhall have it in their power to know the Lord.

JUD. But were not the priefts invefted with authority from the apoftles?

GEN. Yes; to preach the fimplicity of the gofpel, independent of Judaifm, and other corrupt doctines, they were; and fo was every good man, fo far as he lived agreeable to the will of God.

JUD. But priefts were invefted with more than other good men.

GEN. Pray, in what refpect; or in what more were they invefted?

JUD. The authority, thereof, was communicated to them by the apoftles.

GEN. In what manner was it communicated?

JUD. By the ceremony, in laying on of hands; through which ceremony, it is faid they received the power of the Holy Spirit.

GEN. Yes; but that was only a miraculous power, given to the apoftles and other good men, in that age, in propagating of Chrift's religion, in order to convince the world, that the gofpel was from God.

JUD. But the fpirit of the gofpel, is fuppofed to have been conveyed by this very means,

from one priest to another, in all christian ages; from the first, down unto this present.

GEN. By the ignorant, it has; but not by men of understanding.

JUD. Are not the priests or clergy, men of judgment?

GEN. They ought to be so.

JUD. Well, these are the men that profess, and use this ceremony.

GEN. If the spirit of the gospel, is only conveyed by this method; by what means came our protestant clergy, *viz.* our reformed and present divines, by it?

JUD. By the same means.

GEN. Since the spirit of the gospel was conveyed, and remained with the Romish church, so as that they were capable to convey it to the protestant clergy, why did these clergy protest against that church, and depart from her, with whom the spirit of God was? If the spirit of the gospel had remained in the Romish church, as to be capable of being conveyed by them to others, they were certainly culpable in departing from it. But, if the Romish clergy have been corrupted, as asserted by our clergy, it is certain, this spirit was not among them: and if it was not among them, they could never possibly convey or communicate that to others, of which they themselves were not possessors: so that, if the spirit of the gospel is only transferred to others by this method, the protestant clergy have, in

every respect, as little claim thereto, as Roman catholics. By this means, every good man, who walks agreeable to the duties contained in the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, has, in every respect, as good right, if not better, to serve himself thereof, as they, in serving themselves or others.

What I exprest before, I here repeat again, that every human soul, who lives agreeable, and such as have unfeignedly repented of the evil of their way, and have turned unto God, by conforming their lives to these indispensable duties, contained in the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, have, in every respect, as good a right from God, to serve themselves (or families), in the performance of whatever is required therein, as to be served by others; or, as any of the human race has, to serve themselves or others in the performance thereof. For we have it told us expressly, Matth. xviii. 20. that, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

JUD. But, though priests may have lost their authority, may not a christian society restore, or give them authority to officiate in the function of all the different parts of that office?

GEN. Can a society communicate any thing additional to a person, than that of which they themselves are possesst?

JUD. No, certainly not.

GEN. If possesst of a power to endue others, they, for certain, have, in every respect, just

as good a right to use that power themselves, with which they are endued, and communicate to others ; as those to whom it is communicated.

JUD. That, I heartily acknowledge.

GEN. For no person can possibly communicate unto another any thing greater, or above that of which he himself is posselt. No: but yet, though endued therewith, it is necessary, in whatever respect, that every one examine himself, before he either serve, or be served in what is required of him: for no person that walketh disorderly, or contrary thereto, has a right to partake of this ceremony, or ceremonies ; because acting contrary to what Christ has commanded: for to act different from what Christ has required, is to bring not only the religion, but Christ, who is the Author thereof, into disgrace.

What I exprest in the above, I repeat again, that whoever walks, as required in the gospel, has a thousand times better right to serve themselves, in what Christ has commanded, than of being served by some of these mongrel teachers.

But to proceed, For Peter tells us, Acts ii. 38. " That the gift of the holy Spirit, came by " repentance and turning unto God." And likewise, answerable to the above, they tell us in the 46 verse of said chapter, that, " they " continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking of bread from house to " house." And when they did eat together, it was to show, that they were of one body,

or of one religion. And, when dispensed in public, it is certainly necessary that one be appointed for that office.

JUD. After all you have said, you know not but you may be in a mistake.

GEN. If the gospel is right, as I am certain it is, I am fully assured, I am in no mistake.

JUD. Many a one is, in every respect, as fully assured of their being in the right, as you; though deeply entrenched in error.

GEN. True it is, that is too, too often the case; but it is not so with me: for I have an infallible testimony of my not being wrong.

JUD. What may the contents thereof be?

GEN. They are as follows. I have more happiness and pleasure, in the duties of the gospel, and in living in obedience thereto, than in all the world besides: and what is opposite thereto is like death; and though but in others, the thought thereof is no less than what wounds my very soul.

JUD. All Christendom claim that, as well as you.

GEN. But do their lives and actions make good their claims? If their lives and actions be of such a nature, they are right; but if they be of such as would be hurtful to any of the whole human race, either in person or in interest, because not of the same sentiments with themselves, their religion, and far more their claims to christianity, according to the duties contained in the gospel, is vain, and of no effect.

The above is an infallible, and never erring

proof of both; whether their claims, made thereto, be rightly founded or not: For, as exprest by Christ, "The tree is always known by its fruit."

JUD. Having therefore been so long in your company, to the above, I heartily submit.

GEN. When our ancient ancestors were taught, and received the gospel or christian religion from the apostles, it was entirely pure, simple, and divine; but you, Judaizers, by blending it with Judaism, which is only a Pagan service, though paid to the true God, have converted it to, I know not what; to a mere medley, which is neither of Gentile, Jew, nor Christian. But this, I shall illustrate under three different figures, and is, as follows.

First, our religion, like the English Language, (which is compounded of Saxon, Teutonic, Dutch, Danish, Norman, and Modern French), is a mere mixture, the substance thereof is not simple; but complex: compounded by you, Judaizers, from out of both Judaism and christian.

The second may be compared to adulterated metals, corrupted by false and deceitful coiners; who, for every pound of gold and silver they receive from government, mix two with each thereof, of white and yellow metal; and, by its receiving the impression of the king's stamp, they, to enrich themselves, do thereby impose upon the public, in the name of his majesty's authority. The above is quite similar to the case of our religion,

which, by you, Judaizers, ascribing infallibility to whatever systems you add to the gospel, under the name of God's authority, you impose upon the public; and thereby deceive and cheat them out of their souls.

The third and last figure, I shall, therefore, now divide into three different branches.

The first thereof, is to an altar of a triangular form, consisting of three different sides: on each side is an inscription, first of Pagan, second of Judaism, third of Christian. Hence, the apostle Paul made both Jew and gentile to meet together in the gospel, independent of their old Religions. But you, Judaizers, have made them to meet therein, not according to the apostle Paul, but with the addition of their old religions to the bargain, according to you, Judaizers; where you thus blend, and offer all up, upon one altar, together. Now, I perceive it is only by reason of the Alcoran being of a later date than the gospel, (which you, Judaizers, mistrust of being sufficient of itself, alone, for salvation, independent of Judaism), of its not having been added thereunto, also: which, if it had, would have made four different sides, and as many different inscriptions upon your altar: one side for Paganism, a second to Judaism, a third for Christianity, and a fourth for Mahometanism: so that, if any one of these four came short, you (like Balaam of six) had other three in reserve, for your security.

The second branch thereof, is to Balaam, who was not circumscribed to the divinations

of one God, alone, like the priests of the nations. No; but to a plurality of gods: for when Balak was afraid of being hard beset with Israel, he, hearing of Balaam, who could divine with seven different gods, believing that if one should miss, another might peradventure hit the mark, immediately issued out orders, and sent a commission to Balaam, that he might come with all expedition, and curse Israel. This prophet came, according to order; but if he had been as far seen, as you, Judaizers, are, in joining different altars together into one; he, by raising an altar of a heptagon-figure, consisting of seven different sides, inscribing the name of each of these seven different gods, on each of these different sides, *viz.* a god on each side; he, by so doing (like you, Judaizers), might have made all these different gods to harmonize together; and thereby have made the offering of one bullock and one ram suffice, in place of seven of each kind: so that, by deceiving Balak, he might (in time of the three different sacrifices) have either saved, or tricked him out of eighteen bullocks, and eighteen rams; which, at nine pounds per bullock, and one for each ram (as they, no doubt, were the best of both flocks and cattle), being in whole, one hundred and eighty pounds sterling.

Hence, and as Balak and Balaam would not run the risk, in trusting to one altar, and one sacrifice, lest of their being disappointed; neither dare you, Judaizers, trust to the gospel alone, independent of Judaism: for as Balaam,

who mistrusted one altar, and one sacrifice, had recourse to seven; so does it fare with you, Judaizers, who mistrust the gospel, and are employed in one part of the day in holding forth Moses or Judaism, and another the gospel; but ofteneft of all, in blending them both together.

The third and last branch, is the Athenians, who, by mistrusting one god, erected different altars in the Areopagus, to different gods, among whom was one to the unknown or true God; that, whatever god they were pleased to serve, they might have an altar to offer sacrifice thereon to that god, independent of another. But, I would to God, that you, Judaizers, had taken the Athenians for your example; who, though zealous for their gods, kept every altar and sacrifice distinct from another, in place (like you) of blending them together.

Now, therefore, my friends, such as fear God, when you see a mongrelism, in our religion, abound so much among the different nations in Christendom, as it does at this present day, I therefore charge you before God, and the blessed Spirits which stand continually in his presence, waiting to obey his orders, and observe the commissions appointed for them by his will, that ye may be aware thereof; and cleave unto the simplicity of that gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles for the good of men, independent of every other system, wrote and applied in support thereof.

From hence it follows, that, as the people

of Samaria, by holding a compound religion, were thereby held and looked upon as mongrel Jews, by that people. Hence, they also, who, thro' their blending Judaism with the gospel in support thereof, as if insufficient for salvation, independent of said institution, may, in every respect, with as just propriety, be entitled mongrel Christians, through the gross adulterations, (ingrafted on the gospel system, taught by Jesus Christ), to which they so tenaciously adhere. But further,

The apostle John, if he, in his reflecting on the xvi. and xxiii. chapters of Ezekiel, how that the Jews, by blending their own religion with the religion of Paganism, or heathen nations, had not only played the harlot, but had committed adultery, by making the one to harmonize with the other. From which consideration he easily forfaw, as may be gathered from the xvii. and xviii. chapters of the Revelation, the following consequences, which were already begun to take place. That the gentile christians, who, in virtue of you, Judaizers, blending and making the gospel to harmonize with Judaism, would be guilty of the same mistake; and that Rome, which was at that period, and long after, the Metropolis of the world, was no doubt the seat where this unlucky event would take place. And thus the apostle, when speaking of her whoredoms or adulteries, distinguisheth her by the name of the great whore, or mother of harlots; who, by adding Judaism to the gospel, in which they were then taught or instructed by the a-

postles, would even become an abomination unto God. For as a wife, by admitting strangers or other men into her embraces, in place of her own husband, defileth the marriage bed, and becometh an adulteress; so does it fare with such, who admit of the simplicity of the gospel, wherein they were instructed by the apostles, independent of Judaism, by blending and making it harmonize therewith, become an harlot or an adulteress. And as the children thereof are only bastards, or an adulterous breed; so, all such protestants, who admit of the gospel being blended with Judaism, are only an adulterous and bastard breed (of the great whore, the mother of harlots), and not sons: for, as exprest, Ezekiel xvi. 32, 33. "But
" as a wife that committeth adultery, which
" taketh strangers instead of her husband!
" They give gifts to all whores; but thou
" givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and hirest
" them, that they may come to thee on every
" side for thy whoredom." Answerable to the above, the daughters of this whore, their harlot mother, would rather give hire to such teachers, who blend the gospel with Judaism, than be taught, independent of the adulterations thereof, for nothing.

Whoever, therefore, is of capacity to trace down the lineage of this harlot, *viz.* Judaism, or Jewish custom-house, mentioned by the prophet (which was composed of paganism, and of an heathenish extraction), will very easily find out its being transferred from Jerusalem to Rome, by the Judaizing teachers;

where it remains to this present day. For the one, *viz.* the Catholic or Popish custom-house, is an exprefs transcript of the other, *viz.* the Jewish: for the officers of both, live upon the fins of the people. One of the engines of cruelty, used by this infernal band, was to excommunicate all such as differed in sentiment, from the laws of said custom-house: threatening the people (who were almost as ignorant as the brutal tribes), against either eating or drinking with such persons, in order that they might thereby enslave their liberties, and subject them to their infernal dominion. According as the mother; so did such of the protestants, who were the adulterous bastards of the great whore, towards such as would not be subject to the doctrines which they had brought along with them, from their harlot mother. But, as these being men of judgment, against whom they directed their arrows, looked on their behaviour with disdain; despising their anathemas, as being only the blasphemous thunderings and artillery of that dark and sulphureous pit; or croaking of the three unclean frogs, that came out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; out of the mouth of the great whore, and out of the mouth of her adulterous lovers, and out of the mouth of they, who, in the protestant church, are the bastard breed of their harlot mother.

JUD. I am sure we have an account of many great men, recorded in Moses's system, or Jewish church.

GEN. Yes; so have we of the church of Rome.

JUD. But we have a long catalogue of Jewish saints, recorded by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews.

GEN. But to whom was that epistle wrote?

JUD. To the Jews for certain.

GEN. Yes; (but not to the gentiles), therefore, was under a necessity (according to the superstition contained in their own system), when speaking of their canonized ancestors, to mention each thereof, not only with respect, but as men of renown; in order that he might thereby soften, and take off their prejudices, which they had entertained against receiving the gospel; lest he should have given offence, and had prevented them from complying with their own deliverance. For whatever corruptions were ingrafted, or contained in Moses's system, contrary to the law and religion of nature, was sustained as orthodox, by that people; and those who adopted them as divine, were always esteemed by such as good and great men. And likewise, in the Romish church, whatever corruptions are ingrafted thereon, contrary to the simplicity of the gospel, are always sustained orthodox by its professors; and not only this, but the supporters thereof, are always reputed both good and great men, by its professors also: for it was only the priests, who patronized the corruptions in the Jewish system, that canonized those among that people, for good

and great men, because of their being patrons for such absurdities.

And it was also the Romish priests, who canonized those of that church, that were the chief patrons and propagators of her corruptions. For the charters of the Romish custom-house, are an express transcript, transferred to them, of the Jewish; and it was only the priests, who were the canonizers of both. For such among the Jews, as took in the law and religion of nature, which was foreign to their custom-house, were obnoxious to the priests; therefore, condemned to death by these consecrated gentlemen; and the sentence thereof was likewise put in execution by the populace (against such, at the instigation of the priests), according to the order delivered them. And as with the Jews; so did it fare with the Roman Catholics: whoever thereof came to adhere to the simplicity of the gospel (which was a republication of the law and religion of nature, revised by Jesus Christ), not only independent, but who had also rejected the corruptions ingrafted thereon, by their priests, were likewise sentenced and put to death, by the command and instigation of these consecrated gentlemen. But to proceed,

The gospel being; therefore, a republication of the law and religion of nature, with the addition of a resurrection, and of a life to come, there is no person whatever, that taketh upon them to add the assistance of any one system thereto, as if it stood in need thereof for its support, can possibly be a christian:

for whoever addeth thereunto, do, in reality, take from it.

JUD. Do you refuse, that such of the Jews, who complied with the gospel, were christians.

GEN. Such, thereof, as renounced Judaism, and heartily complied with the gospel, independent thereof, were no doubt christians; but, though the whole Jewish nation had accepted thereof together, if they did not part with, but retained Judaism, the whole thereof, by reason of that addition, would only have been a mere mixture, or mongrel religion, neither Jewish nor christian. The taking place of the gospel, is what made three different states of religion, *viz.* gentile, Jew, and christian. And whether they were Jew or gentile, that complied with the gospel, they behoved to leave all the different trumpery or furniture, contained in their old religion, behind them: for if they did not, the gospel, by the mixture thereof, became only a mere compound, or mongrel religion.

Is it not, therefore, evident, from Leviticus, how much Moses was aware against the danger of admitting a mixture into his religion. For proof thereof, see chapter xix. 19. "Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind. Thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed; neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woolen come upon thee." All of which implied, the not mixing of other religions with their own. See also Eph. ii. 14. "For

“ he is our peace, who hath made both one,
“ and hath broken down the middle wall of
“ partition between us.” This, with others
of like nature, respects the condemnation of
Judaism; and implies the meeting of both Jew
and gentile, in the gospel, together: not depend-
ing upon, or admitting the least or smallest
particle of their old, or former religions, being
brought along with them, in support of the
new, *viz.* the gospel, which they either had,
or were invited to embrace. No: for whoso-
ever addeth or mixeth any other system with
the gospel, as if it either stood in need, or de-
pended thereon for its support, whether they
be Jew, or gentile, they are not christians; but
mongrels, neither gentiles, Jews, nor christi-
ans, and may be said to be of no religion at
all; therefore, not admitted of as christians,
in the sight of God.

Hence, to such, we may, therefore, apply
that which was exprest to the church of Lao-
dicea, Rev. iii. 15, 16. “ I know thy works,
“ that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would
“ that thou wert cold or hot. So then, be-
“ cause thou art luke-warm, and neither cold
“ nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”
Now, therefore, I know thee, thou Judaizing
teacher, that, by thy confounding my gospel
with Judaism, thou art neither christian, Jew,
nor gentile: I would that thou wert either
Jew or gentile, that thou mightest become
christian: so then, because thou art only a
compound or mongrel, and neither christian,

Jew, nor gentile, I will spue thee out of my mouth. So that, by you Judaizers confounding the gospel with Judaism, it is thereby converted (through your compound), into a mere mongrel religion, not only despised, but left of God; and therefore, have waxed worse and worse, that such another mass of corruption found, and monster of wickedness equal thereto, is not to be heard of under the whole heaven.

Further, if our ancient (and other) ancestors, the gentiles, had behaved as we, all, and every soul of us, had no doubt been heathens unto this very moment. For they, when instructed in the knowledge of the gospel by the apostles, gave up with paganism; and frankly complied with the gospel, which was both taught and received by that people, independent of Judaism; and not only this, but was also discharged by them against receiving it. But yet, after all, when ingrafted on the gospel by Judaizing teachers, and we accustomed thereto; though (taught independent thereof by the apostles) we would just, in every respect, as soon give up with the gospel itself, as part with Judaism, though strictly discharged by the apostles against receiving it. Which fully proves, that, by our cleaving fast to Moses's system, because accustomed thereto, though positively discharged against receiving it, if the gentiles, our ancient ancestors, had behaved as we, in cleaving fast to paganism, to which they were accustomed,

we all, for certain, had been heathens unto this present day.

Now, we, though taught in the knowledge of the gospel, have come far short of their example: for, instead of giving up with Judaism, as ordered by the apostles, we would rather persecute such as reject it, according as appointed us by the apostles.

JUD. But, you very well know, that, by the vulgar report, the authority of the gospel depends altogether upon Judaism; and, you very well know, that, upon the removal thereof, the gospel must certainly go for naught.

GEN. O vain man, that admitteth of being stolen out of thy Judgment, through the craft and artifice of priests! Does truth depend upon any thing besides God? No, certainly not. If the credit of the gospel system had depended upon Moses, upon whom did the authority of Moses's system depend?

JUD. It is said to have depended upon God.

GEN. Do you admit the authority of Moses being from God; and yet refuse the authority of the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ, to be from God, independent of Moses? Strange! strange doctrine indeed! that would honour Moses's system with having come from God, independent of every other system before it; and yet, refuse the gospel being from God, independent of Moses's, which was only a mere transcript of the church of Egypt, corrected by Jethro, the priest of Midian, his, *viz.* Moses's father-in-law.

JUD. But, if the gospel had no dependence on Judaism, why did not Christ set aside the ceremonial law?

GEN. Christ would, no doubt, have removed or set aside the ceremonial law, if it had not been, that the prejudice of that people could not then bear it, as appears evident from John, where he saith to his disciples, chap. xvi. 12. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." What is here exprest, in said text, implies expressly the abolishment, or setting aside of Judaism, viz. that of the ceremonial law, with whatever is not comprehended in the gospel.

From hence, we may, therefore, now conclude, from the foregoing, that such as hold the gospel conformable to Judaism, and inseparable from that constitution, as if it depended thereon for its authority, do thereby, in exprest words, hold it in unrighteousness, contrary to the will and command of God.

JUD. I, being therefore no longer able to withstand your argument, do, at last, heartily submit to the justness of your reasoning against Judaism.

GEN. You indeed may; but will such as they, who are beasts of burden to Judaizing teachers, submit.

JUD. No: for instead of submitting thereto, they would rather consent to your suffering, though even unto death, than submit to the justness of your reasoning upon that subject.

GEN. But whether do such accusers con-

demn or approve of the Jews, in the accusation brought against the apostle Paul, when they were going to put him to death, for his rejecting, and discharging the gentiles against Judaism?

JUD. In words, they condemn; but, in actions, they approve; for, in their accusing you, they, in reality, confirm the sentence of the bigoted Jews, in condemning the apostle (for his rejecting and speaking against Judaism; and thus they not only confirm, but do thereby join with the forty vagabonds, who bound themselves under a curse, that they would neither eat nor drink, till once they had killed Paul); therefore, not one whit better than they. For that to which you adhere, and are condemned by your accusers for rejecting, is the sentence, not only of the apostle Paul, but of the whole apostolic synod, met at Jerusalem, and there signed its abolishment with their own hands.

It, therefore, now remains, that such as call for a resurrection of that which was abolished at the command of God, by that venerable assembly, are worse than the idolatrous Israelites, who called for a resurrection of the Egyptian god, in making the calf, which they worshipped in the wilderness. For that people, because they believed that they had lost both Moses their leader, and their God, immediately to recover their loss, raised up the image of a brutish god (like themselves), with whom they had been acquainted, when in Egypt. But such as have not lost the liberty of the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his

apostles, and yet call back, as divine, that which was banished at the command of God, are incomparably more culpable, and less excusable than they.

GEN. That is what I heartily believe, and am happy of your being sensible thereof.

JUD. I am, therefore, perfectly convinced of the gospel having been taught by the apostles, under two different or distinct modes, one to the Jews, and another to the gentiles; and, that the gentiles received it in its purity: but, to the Jews who were so much bigoted, and prejudiced in favour of Moses, it, for certain, was made to harmonize with Judaism; lest being offended thereat, they had prevented their being reconciled thereto; but the gentiles having no prejudices thereat, to them alone was the gospel not only taught, but received in its perfect purity, without the smallest tincture of corruption, like that to which the Jews were subjected, by reason of the deep rooted prejudices, they had so long entertained in favours of Moses; and taken up against Christ and his religion, because contrary, and to the abolishment of the former. For whatever people have been long accustomed to, though ever so bad of itself, to effect either a change, or an amendment therein, is never accomplished, but with the utmost difficulty: and if either takes place, the struggle that the patient then undergoes, betwixt the two, may very justly be stiled the pangs of a new birth.

The most astonishing circumstance I ever yet knew, is that of the Jews, *viz.* their man-

ner of worship, wherewith they pretend to serve God; and also, their putting to death the nations of Canaan, that they themselves might seize on their inheritance. For all of which, they confidently ascribed the authority of Almighty God; though, mean time, nothing more inconsistent with his nature than both: for which he at last, though they being many years in possession thereof, not only abolished the rites of their superstition, but likewise, either destroyed, or dispossessed every soul of that people, of said land, the same as they had done to the Canaanites which were before them: nor is this all:—No; but something still remains, in every respect, as strange; which is, their superstition, which took place forty years before they entered and took possession of said land, was abolished to the gentiles, *viz.* Cornelius, by the express command of God, eight years after Christ's death; and utterly abolished to them, exactly the same period of years after that event, *viz.* forty. But publicly by the apostles, to the gentiles, nineteen years after, and twenty-one before, the Jews were destroyed by Vespasian; and utterly extirpated that country, by the command of Titus the Roman Emperor.

Hence, there was no prodigy could possibly have appeared so great, though ever so false, but what the leaders of that people could, with the utmost confidence, have ascribed the performance of said prodigy to Almighty God, if necessary, to influence, or inspire the people with ambition to perform what they, *viz.* the

priests, commanded, if useful, to keep them in subjection for their advantage; or act of wickedness have been so barbarous, cruel and unjust, but what they would have likewise applied the requiring the accomplishment thereof to God. Nor was the belief of these absurdities circumscribed to that people alone. No: for even among ourselves, not to mention Roman Catholics, when once the priest has prevailed so far upon the ignorance of the people, as to debar the use of these powers, wherewith we are possessed, and have received from God, from acting their proper function, appointed thereto by the divine will, they do even, with confidence, not only believe, but assert the self same absurdities thereof, as well as they.

To conclude this dialogue; the Jewish history, for apparent falsehoods, exceeds all I ever yet read or heard of; but, in order to supply this defect, they have most artfully ascribed the authority thereof, and of all its prodigies, to Almighty God. And, by virtue of said authority, it is not only esteemed, but received by the credulous, the ignorant, and unthinking croud, as a most sacred and divine truth. And yet, after all, these are they who call themselves christians, though even altogether void of the real and true knowledge of Christ's religion, as taught by him and his apostles. Lastly; but before either person or people, can be acceptable to the priest, in what he, or his constituents call orthodox, they, of necessity, must renounce whatever powers they have received

from God, superior to those of the brutal tribes.

DIALOGUE VII.

Of Regeneration, or being Born again.

GEN. **T**HE gross nature of Judaism, or Mosaic system, can never possibly be exhibited in a more just light, than what is here exprest by Christ, in the following texts. John iii. Where, in speaking to Nicodemus the Jewish ruler, who came to him by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles, except God be with him. Verse 3. "Jesus, answering, "said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, "except a man be born again, he cannot see "the kingdom of God." That is, except ye give up with Judaism, or Mosaic system, in which ye believe (that your different sacrifices, and other appendages of the ceremonial law, will suffice in place of an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, for the pardon of sin), ye cannot see the kingdom of God.

Hence, the above was the case through the whole Jewish state; so that, when such as were Pagans came to be profelyted, and embraced Judaism, they were baptized thereunto by plunging, or washing them in water from their heathenish pollutions, in which they had

formerly lived. What is here exprest, may justly be supposed to imply Christ's meaning, of being born again, namely, their giving up with Judaism, by a thorough repentance and turning unto God, that their iniquities might be blotted out. All such, therefore, who became christians, whether Jew or gentile, behoved to renounce what they formerly held in being acceptable to God, as unprofitable for salvation; and be baptized, or washed from the pollution of that which they held as sacred, or acceptable to God.

Hence, it was an established maxim with both Jews and gentiles, when either of these different sects gave up with their old religion, and came to embrace a new, they were thus washed, as in the above; and is what is exprest in being born again, as is evident from the 5th verse. Verse 4. "Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Nicodemus understood being born again, only, in the sense of an animal birth; and not in conforming, in the government of life, to the will of God. Verse 5. "Jesus answered, and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." To be born of water, and of the spirit, as observed by Dr. Edwards, "Implies a moral or spiritual washing; the cleansing and purifying the heart and affections from all the pollutions and defilements of sin; the

no longer living according to the will of the flesh, but according to the guidance and direction of the rational faculty, or spirit; in a word, a man's turning from a carnal to a spiritual course of life, and thus being, as it were, born again, or becoming a new creature.

But Christ, in this expression to be born of spiritual water, seems to allude to the Jewish custom of initiating proselytes of righteousness, as they were called, into their religion, by baptizing or washing them with water, who, after having been thus baptized or washed, were looked upon as regenerated or born again. (See Lewis's antiquities of the Hebrew republic, vol. 2. page 456, 457.; and likewise, Limborch's lib. 5. chap. 67. and Pool's, and Beaufobres's annotations.) And indeed, as Nicodemus was of the sect of the pharisees, who, as is well known, laid a much greater stress upon the performance of external rites and ceremonies, than upon internal holiness and purity, Christ seems purposely to have made use of this phrase, to insinuate to him, that a mere external washing or baptism, was not sufficient to make a person a real disciple of his, and to entitle him to the great blessings and privileges of the spiritual kingdom, he was going to erect in the world. A proselyte to his religion must be, in a spiritual sense, born again: he must have (what indeed, as being a natural emblem of it, this outward material baptism was designed to represent) an inward spiritual washing.

Besides, this new birth, which Christ expres-

ses here by a being born of water and spirit, he calls, in verse 8. a being born of the spirit; "so is every one that is born of the spirit," which most evidently shews, that, by water and spirit, in this verse, he meant one and the same thing.

The kingdom of God, or as we read in other places, the kingdom of heaven, is an expression, which frequently occurs in the New Testament, and has, as is well known, various significations. It sometimes imports the doctrines of Christ only; or that system of religion and morality, which he came to communicate to mankind; frequently the preaching and publishing of these doctrines; and often that heavenly kingdom, or future state of endless happiness, which the righteous will enter into at the great day of retribution: in very many places, it likewise signifies the spiritual kingdom, which God has erected by the Messiah, with all the great blessings and privileges it confers upon those who become members of it, and are governed by its laws. In which latter sense, I understand it in the passage before us, as both the sense and context seem most evidently to require.

The true meaning of the whole verse, then, I take to be this, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, no person, whether Jew or gentile, can possibly be my disciple, and a member of that kingdom I am going to set up, unless he cleanses and purifies himself, from all the pollutions and defilements of sin; and is, in a moral and spiritual sense, regenerated and

born again; and becomes, as it were, a new creature."

Hence, we may, therefore, apply what is exprest, in being born again, to their being washed from the pollution of Judaism, in their being baptized into the gospel of Christ, through the pardon of sin, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God.

Verse 6. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The meaning of said verse, according to Dr. Edwards, is to be understood as follows. "Christ here assigns a reason for the necessity of this new moral birth, or spiritual regeneration; because that which is born of; i. e. is produced by, or proceeds from the flesh, or the carnal appetites and passions, is always of a carnal nature; but that which proceeds from the rational faculty or spirit, is always of a spiritual nature. "The works of the flesh," saith St. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, v. 19. "are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.—But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such their is no law." The flesh and spirit, are two opposite springs of action; and consequently, the effects which proceed from them, must be opposite. 'Tis impossible, in the nature of

things, that either the former should produce the effects of the latter, or the latter produce the effects of the former. For, if one considers and observes Dr. Sykes, upon this passage (Script. Doct. of Redempt. page 81.) “ what the flesh is, namely, the source of the appetites and passions, and the spring of our affections, nothing can be expected from it, but indulging those things, towards which, we are so strongly moved; whereas, to make ourselves acceptable to God, we must follow a spiritual course of life.” As then, no person could be a member of the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, who was not spiritually minded, and walked after the spirit—And as no one, whilst under the influence and guidance of sense, can possibly mind the things, and bring forth the fruits of the spirit, it evidently follows, that, in order to be members of this kingdom, all who were in the flesh, were necessarily, in a spiritual sense, to be born again; or no longer to be under the dominion of their carnal and sensual appetites and passions; but, to put themselves under the government and direction of their rational powers,” in acting conformable to the will of God.

Verse 7. “ Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must give up with Judaism: to be born again, is to be washed from the pollution thereof, and be baptized into the gospel of Christ.

Verse 8. “ The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof,

“ but canst not tell whence it cometh, or
“ whither it goeth: so is every one that is
“ born of the spirit.” It is not our Savi-
our’s design to intimate, as Dr. Sykes again
justly remarks upon this verse, Script. Doct.
page 82, “ that a man has no power of himself;
to act, or to change the course of his life; or
to say that God alone grants, or effects the
conversion of all sinners, when and how he
listeth; or, that men are no more accountable
for the alteration of their lives, than they are
for the effects of the wind’s blowing.” Christ,
undoubtedly, intended here nothing more
than this, that Nicodemus ought not to won-
der at this new moral or spiritual birth, be-
cause it was not discernable by the eye of sense;
since, in the natural world, we meet with cases
of a similar kind, particularly in the wind; the
sound of which we hear, and whose effects
we feel and own, and from hence are assured
that it is something real; but yet, it is not an
object of our sight: for we neither know
whence it comes, or whither it goes; which
we should, were it visible. Similar to this, is
that passage in Eccles. xi. 5. “ As thou
knowest not what is the way of the spirit, or
of the wind, &c.” Now, there are a great ma-
ny accidental causes, by which the course and
direction of the wind may be, and actually is
altered and varied. But from its being invi-
sible, it is impossible to know where these
changes or variations happen or take place;
and in particular, where it received the last
direction, with which it comes to us; or what

direction it may take, when it has passed by, and goes from us.

Thus it is with this new or spiritual birth, wrought in a regenerated person: it can no more be discerned by the eye of sense, than the wind; but is discoverable only by its effects."

Verses 9, 10. " Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? " Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not, that whosoever is profelyted to Judaism, must, therefore, be washed from his heathenish pollutions; or born again, in his being received thereunto by baptism?

Verses 12. " If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not." If I have told you things, which ye daily experience, *viz.* the baptizing of profelytes, which is sustained by you to be a new birth, or born by virtue thereof to your religion, and knows not that such as are delivered therefrom into the knowledge of my gospel, or kingdom I am going to set up, must be washed from their former pollutions, born again, or baptized thereunto also.

It is, therefore, now evident, from what was there expressed, in the foregoing, by our Saviour to Nicodemus, that being born again was well understood by that people, of the baptizing of profelytes into Judaism: for Christ speaks to Nicodemus, as if astonished at his ignorance in the knowledge of baptism, saying, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Does not know, that such as are profelyted from paganifm to your religion, muft relinquish and part with their old heathen rites, and religious ceremonies, before they can be baptized or initiated into yours: that they muft be born again, to part with Moses, to whom they were fo much bigoted (before they were to be initiated or baptized into Chrift's religion), was what the Jews could by no means difpenfe with.

Hence, fome of our weak, our fuperftitious, and ignorant teachers, who patronize the fictitious doctrine of original fin, have ufed their utmoft endeavours, or rhetoric, to pervert, or mifapply thefe different texts, into fuch a meaning, as of the whole human race, being not only depraved, but even altogether corrupted, by virtue of Adam's firft fin; therefore, of neceffity, muft be born of a fupernatural birth, before they can be accepted of in the fight of God. And, on purpofe of the above doctrine being fwallowed down, by their weak, ignorant, and deluded votaries, they tell them, that, if thefe texts of being born again, and the like, were to be underftood in fuch a fenfe, as the bringing in, or profelyting of mankind, fuch as Jews and Gentiles, into the chriitian church or religion, their being baptized thereunto, would be to fill heaven with the worft thereof, as well as with the beft, for whom it was prepared. But, in answer to fuch a poor, weak, and childish objection, Does the initiating of a people into a chriitian fociety, by the feals of baptifm, ensure them of heaven? Certainly not:

For baptism is nothing more, than only that which giveth them a right to the privileges of that society. And if they walk agreeable to the established rules of the society to which they are initiated, they shall be rewarded according to the promises annexed thereto; and, if they do not walk conformable to the rules thereof, they shall be punished, answerable to their demerit; and threatenings therein, issued out against them. For the enjoyment thereof, is from the goodness of God, who bestows and brings us thereunto; but the improvement, or misimprovement thereof, is ours; and it is God's prerogative to reward us, according to our merit, whether of good or of evil. When a Gentile was profelyted to Judaism, and went through the ceremony of washing or baptism, he was then looked upon, by that people, to have underwent a new birth, or what they call born again; and if born again, he therefore became a new creature, as exprest by the Hebrew doctors: for they say, that the profelyte was looked upon as born again, and thereby to have underwent a new birth. So that, all such as were born in a gentile state, *viz.* of gentile parents, before profelyted to Judaism, were not looked upon as their children. No: For if the profelyte chanced to have children before his conversion, they were not to inherit his means, after he embraced Judaism.

Hence, the external washing of baptism, was meant by Christ, only, to represent the internal purification of the mind, that it should depart from iniquity, and not walk after the flesh, or

animal passions. No; but after the dictates of the rational spirit, by complying with the will of God.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that Judaism was neither given by God, nor came from him: for nothing polluted or unclean, can possibly come from God. For if Judaism had come from God, and the gospel a fulfilment thereof, as asserted by those who blend them together, there had certainly been nothing therein, either polluted or unclean, as to have stood in need of being cleansed therefrom, by the washing of baptism.—And for proof thereof, the Jews were, in every respect, under as much necessity of being baptized, or externally washed with water, from the pollutions of that religion, as the heathens themselves.

JUD. But, as the gospel was a fulfilment thereof, they have, no doubt, used baptism to such as became christian, or added the gospel thereto.

GEN. As nothing impure nor unclean, can come from God; baptism, or washing with water, can never possibly be applied to the accomplishment thereof; but only to that which is polluted or unclean.

From hence it follows, that, if Judaism had come from God, it had certainly been pure, void of all manner of pollutions; therefore, though it should have underwent ten thousand changes, if pure, could never possibly have been washed from its pollution, as is meant by washing in baptism.

JUD. But the reason why the Jews underwent this ceremony, in accepting of the gospel, was, perhaps, in order to wash away the different pollutions, which had been ingrafted on Judaism.

GEN. Not so: for though the Jews sometimes added idolatry itself to Judaism, baptism was never either used or required of them. No, it never was; which declares expressly of your being altogether ignorant of the import of that ceremony. For the very original intention of baptism, or washing with water, in change thereof, implies the renunciation of a false religion; nor was it ever originally used by any people, under another meaning, than in the above: which tells us expressly, that, as baptism was used to the Jews, the same as to the gentiles (who were obliged to undergo that ceremony as well as they), that Judaism proceeded not from God: for as nothing polluted nor unclean, can possibly come from God, washing by baptism, can never be applied thereto.

JUD. But the reason why baptism was repeated, or used a second time to such of the Jews as became christian, has been, in order to remove and wash away the guilt of original sin, whereby they and all others were polluted, by virtue of Adam's first transgression.

GEN. Was there no original sin till that period? Hence, according to your argument, there was not. For baptism was never repeated or used a second time, as observed in the

above, to either Jews or Gentiles, after their first initiation.

JUD. But the repetition of this ceremony, may have referred to the guilt, or pollution of that sin, being removed by the gospel, or death of Christ.

GEN. If the gospel was only the fulfilment, or an accomplishment of Judaism, as asserted by Jews and Judaizing teachers, this ceremony of baptism ought, therefore, to have been used formerly, in reference thereto, by that people, as well as after; and as it never was repeated to posterity, by Jews and such as had been initiated into that religion before that period, could have no reference thereto; which is, no doubt, an incontestible evidence and demonstration, of the deceit and falsehood of both.

Hence, it is, therefore, now evident, that the religious pollutions, from which the Jews were to be washed, was from Moses or beneath; and that into which Christ tells them they were to be born again, or baptized unto, was from above, or from God. For this reason, Christ speaks to Nicodemus, as if he had been surprised of his not knowing the meaning of being born again: for he speaks unto him in the following manner, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" or what may rather, through thy ignorance, be called a stranger in Israel, that knowest not how that one, who from gentilism is persuaded to live as do the Jews, when among that people; and who from knowledge, doth also

conform to the worship and service of the true God; but not their rites and ceremonies.

It is, therefore, now evident, from the foregoing, that what is there exprest by Christ to Nicodemus, of their being born again, alluded to their being washed from the pollutions of Judaism, in being baptized into the gospel of Christ, though Nicodemus understood him not. For if baptism had not been that with which the Jews had usually been acquainted, Christ, for certain, had never accused Nicodemus, on account of his being ignorant thereof. No, certainly not. For no person can possibly be accused, according to justice, for that which he is ignorant of. No; he never possibly can.

I shall, therefore, wind up this third book, with that which is exprest by the apostle John, where he saith, chap. iv. 1. "Beloved, believe
" not every spirit; but try the spirits, whether
" they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

From hence, I would, therefore, warn every human soul, to be aware against Judaism; and against all such teachers as blend, and thereby make it harmonize with the gospel, *viz.* such, as in that linsley-woolsey composition, wrote to the Hebrews (in order to soften and take off the prejudice of that people against it, *viz.* the gospel), and others of like nature, in which they not only believe themselves, but also impose and require a belief therein of others. But neither he that requireth, nor he that believeth therein, being only of a mongrel re-

ligion, ought therefore, to be admitted as Christians, till once they renounce and give up therewith, as an imposition on the gospel, which is perfectly simple, pure, and of no connection with the above, as to depend thereon. No: For he that blendeth, and thereby confoundeth the gospel with any other system under heaven, is an exprefs enemy thereto.

T H E
G O S P E L R E C O V E R E D
F R O M I T S
C A P T I V E S T A T E .

B O O K I V .

Concerning the Nature of Justice.

D I A L O G U E I .

JUD. **H**AVING, therefore, ended our last subject, concerning the authority of Judaïsm (but not without satisfaction), there remains another, which has been long and much talked of, concerning the Nature of Justice. A subject, as I apprehend, which deserves our highest attention.

GEN. Yes; and a subject never less understood, or worse applied, than by you, Judaizers.

JUD. Justice has been understood in almost all ages, as never to have been satisfied, under less than a full or complete restitution. And from this very supposition, have almost all the different sacrifices, in the human world, taken place.

Supposing, that if once God, or the gods, were offended, they could not again be appeased, or satisfied with less than the death of the offender: for which cause, they fell upon this scheme, that, by transferring over the guilt thereof upon the head of some innocent animal, by laying their hands on the head thereof, and that by slaying, or taking away the life of said animal, the god, or gods, which they had offended, was thereby again appeased, and satisfied for the offence they themselves had committed; and they again, upon account thereof, restored to favour as before. And upon this very basis, was Judaism, or Jewish religion, built. And as the apostles being under a necessity, when instructing the Jews, of making Judaism harmonize with the gospel, lest they should have been offended thereat, or prejudiced against receiving it, they oft-times made the Jewish sacrifices refer to, and harmonize in a figurative and allegorical sense, with the death of Christ, to that people; though, I justly acknowledge, altogether independent thereof, to the Gentiles.

GEN. I heartily agree to your narration.

JUD. If you agree thereto, you will, therefore, please let us have your sentiments upon that subject.

GEN. At your request I shall; but, I do not at present intend to enter into what may be called a nice disquisition, concerning the different modes of justice; but only, so far as, upon the whole, the same stands in relation to the

rest of what we understand of his divine attributes. And from these, I shall consider how far the punishing of the innocent upon account of the guilty, and the requiring more of his creatures than what they are capable to perform, will thereby corroborate with the nature of strict and positive justice, as the same may be understood to exist in, and proceed from God.

But, to proceed, though I do not intend to trouble the reader with too much nicety in my treating upon this subject, I shall essay to discuss the substance thereof, in as obvious a manner as its nature, and my present opportunity, will possibly admit of.

JUD. In the first place, What was the principal motive that incited God to make rational creatures, endowed with rational faculties?

GEN. The reason, I apprehend, which moved God to give being to rational creatures, is this. As God being infinitely happy in and of himself, and as the happiness of the Deity being infinite, it is not unreasonable for us to suppose, that his desire was, that that consummate happiness, as infinite, might not be altogether circumscribed to himself alone; but that other beings, such as did not then exist, might exist, of which, this superabundant happiness of his, was more than sufficient to make happy also. And upon this account, he willed rational existence into being, that they, in partaking thereof, might be happy also.

JUD. Wherein does the happiness of these rational creatures consist?

GEN. The nature, as I apprehend, whereof the happiness of rational creatures consists, is of their being created in a state of freedom in their wills, possess'd of a power either to chuse or refuse. Now, a freedom of choice, is what still supposes two distinct objects, *viz.* that of good and evil, and to each thereof, their due merit, whether of punishment or reward, according to the nature of the object and choice made: for without a freedom of will, there could be no probationary state; and without being capable of a probationary state, there could be no true or real knowledge, either of perfect complete happiness, or of misery: For it is only of our being capable of the one, whereby we are capable of the real enjoyment of the other. For, without this freedom of will, there could be neither virtue nor vice:—for the want of this freedom, would put a final end to both. Now, therefore, since that rational beings are created probationers, or in a probationary state, it is certainly most requisite, that justice be employed therein, to give unto every one their due.

From hence, I shall, therefore, now consider the nature, the properties, and necessity of justice, as a necessary attribute of God, in giving unto every one their due, answerable to what each thereof have merited in this present life. In the first place, Justice, when understood in a moral sense, is one of the four cardinal virtues, which consist in giving to every person his due; and whose nature is perfect, equitable, and right; and its properties are unalterable;

and its necessity binds us fast to the established laws of rectitude; and is, no doubt, a most essential attribute and perfection of God, in the government of the world: without which, all would be reduced to confusion.

Hence, for the better understanding of this attribute, I shall, therefore, here specify these two different perfections of God, that are most nearly connected with his justice, *viz.* his boundless mercy, and his irresistible power: for what is justice, if not invested with power to punish its despisers.

JUD. In the first place, what are the qualities of these his different perfections? Is his justice infinite?

GEN. Yes.

JUD. Is his mercy infinite?

GEN. Most certainly.

JUD. Is his power infinite?

GEN. Yes.

JUD. Are these three distinct attributes of God, absolute in their natures?

GEN. They are absolute, as to their perfections, though not absolutely concerned in their nominal stations; but, as they are all the attributes of the one true God, they are all equally related, and inseparably connected one with another. For what is absolute power, without justice and mercy to regulate it? or, what is absolute justice and mercy, without power to punish their despisers? or what is absolute justice, without mercy to qualify it? Or, what is absolute mercy, without justice to attend and accompany it? In one

word, to apply any of these three perfections of God, to God, in a strict or positive sense, separate, or independent of one another, in his government of the world, cannot be supposed less than downright blasphemy: and the reason why; because it would make God appear absolutely unjust, and altogether inconsistent with himself.

Thus I have made it fully evident, that, according to the nature of God, these distinct perfections of the Deity, depend entirely upon one another.

From hence, according to the nature of God, not one thereof can possibly be separated from another, without destroying the whole: For if justice shall be taken in an absolute, strict, or positive sense, without respect to mercy, and altogether independent thereof, what then becomes of mercy? If mercy is thus dealt with, she would then come to be deprived, not only of her right, but even drove from the boundaries of space, in which God himself exists. For what would God be, if stript or divested of mercy, which, no doubt, is a most necessary attribute of God, and will be, so long as rational creatures, or finite beings exist. For that of absolute power, and strict or positive justice, exclusive and divested of his other attributes, is suitable to none, but an infinite God, attended with nothing less than infinite beings; and these also, in every respect, just as capable of infinite perfection and holiness, as himself. For a finite being, is what can never possibly produce an infinite

action or offence; and if incapable thereof, it can never be supposed, that an infinite satisfaction can be required for an action, which is nothing more than finite. But a God of absolute power, strict and positive justice, independent of mercy, invested with the government of creatures, endowed with rational capacities, such as finite beings, would be altogether inconsistent with the nature, and rectitude of the true God, the God of the universe.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, that the attributes of God, can never possibly be divided; as that one thereof should usurp over another: for each of these attributes, are certainly necessary for the government of his creatures.

Hence, how often has this attribute of his justice been most warmly handled, in these two different lights, *viz.* that of positive, and the other in a passive sense? The first thereof being this, that, if justice be not positively executed, in an express manner, upon the offender she is wronged; therefore, is no more justice; because deprived of her proper right. The second, that justice is only to be satisfied in such a manner as the nature of the offence requires, and according to the capacity and degree of knowledge, with which the being is possessed, by whom the offence has been committed.

In the first place, If the being which hath either despised or offended justice, be infinite, and possessed of the same degree of perfection, knowledge, and capacity, as that of infinite

justice actually is, then the offence must certainly be infinite, and requires positive execution, without mercy, upon the offender; because, in which offence, he hath thereby exceeded the bounds of mercy. But, when a being of a finite capacity, offendeth against a being of infinite degree and capacity, there is still room for mercy, upon its repentance: and the reason why, is this; because the offence was no more than finite, whereas the other was infinite. For a finite being, is altogether incapable of an infinite offence, though committed against an infinite one: and the reason why; because the one is only finite, and the other infinite; therefore, not equal in degree. For the offence can never possibly be infinite, when not committed by an infinite agent, against an infinite: for an infinite offence, can never possibly be committed, except an infinite being were capable of transgressing the laws of an infinite, which is impossible.

Now, from what has been said, it, therefore, appears evident, that justice is by no means wronged, though not positively exacted, and executed upon the repenting sinner.

Hence, let us, therefore, not wrong, or presume to rob mercy of her right: for it is just with her, not only to crave, but even also to require her due, the same as justice. For if justice has been offended, and the offender become self-condemned, and thereby accused, himself, for his fault, for the offence done against justice; justice, in this acknowledgment, is incomparably more satisfied, than when ex-

acted and duly executed to the full upon the offender: and the reason why; because mercy, his fellow attribute, hath received her due, and is thereby satisfied also.

Now, from this it is evident, that justice is neither wronged, nor is mercy neglected; as both hath received their due, and are fully satisfied together.

JUD. It is not only the opinion, but is even asserted by some as an infallible truth, that every offence or transgression of the law, is infinite, or of an infinite nature, because committed against an infinite God.

GEN. Yes; such doctrines are, indeed, taught; but it appears fully evident, from the above, that a finite being, is what can never possibly be capable of an infinite offence, tho' committed against an infinite one: for an infinite action can never possibly be produced by a finite being; but by an infinite.

JUD. They further assert, that, as the offence being infinite, or of an infinite nature, according to their hypothesis, it can never possibly be forgiven; nor justice satisfied, without an infinite satisfaction.

GEN. I know it has been maintained, by such as are mongrel christians, who, to remedy their wild hypothesis, make the innocent to suffer in place of the guilty: But, by their attempting to evade one evil, they do, thereby, plunge themselves into a far greater, *viz.* that of punishing the innocent, in the room and stead of the guilty: a thing altogether impossible with Justice; because contrary to the very

nature thereof. By which hypothesis, Mercy would not only be neglected, but even thereby robbed and excluded from being an attribute of God: for to punish the innocent in place of the guilty, is altogether inconsistent with the nature of strict and positive justice; and if inconsistent with justice, is therefore condemnable in the sight of God.

JUD. If the punishing the innocent, upon account of the guilty, be inconsistent with the nature of strict and positive justice, what then becomes of all our orthodox clergy, who patronize this doctrine, and such as are taught and adhere thereto?

GEN. That is not my province to judge: let them see to that: for I will by no means usurp God's authority, in judging of others.

But, for the better understanding of this subject, I shall refer you to what is exprest by Jesus Christ, concerning the nature of Justice, in our forgiving the offences of those who trespass against us: for which, see Matth. xviii. 21, 22. "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven." See also Luke xvii. 3, 4. "Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Christ

faith, here, Thou shalt not only forgive him till seven times ; but, until seventy times seven.

Now, in what light is this, in which they represent the just and true God, in requiring of us his rational creatures to forgive our brother, not only one, nor twenty-one, but even four hundred and ninety times, *viz.* four hundred and ninety trespasses, upon no higher terms than upon his repenting, acknowledging his fault, and turning unto us ; and yet he, himself, will not forgive the repenting sinner, one finite offence, without an infinite satisfaction ; when, in truth, he hath promised, Matth. vi. 14, 15. " That, if we forgive " men their trespasses, our heavenly Fa- " ther will also forgive ours. But if ye " forgive not men their trespasses, neither " will your Father forgive your trespasses." A most strange and shocking theology indeed ! to represent God as requiring of us to forgive one another, whether they be superiors, inferiors, or equals, their different faults, in which they have trespassed against us, upon their repentance ; and yet he, himself, will not forgive us so much as one sin, as he hath promised in the above, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him. Now, what is all this, it is not only a metamorphosing the infinite goodness of God, but is also a reducing of him, far below his rational creatures, as being altogether incapable to forgive sin, by circumscribing his goodness in such a respect, as if neither able nor willing to forgive the least offence of his creatures, without an infinite

fatisfaction, when he himself requires of us, as in the above, to forgive all manner of injuries.

Hence, those puny mortals, who set forth God in such a light, as of a piece with themselves, is a just characteristic of the little mind, that can neither pass by, nor forgive others. But what will not the great mind do, in forgiving others, for their good:—for the being is only known and distinguished by its actions. Kings will even forgive treason, when of a personal or private capacity, and criminals under sentence of death; but the little and contracted mind, will neither look over, pass by, nor forgive the smallest injury.

Further, if a person, but more especially a parent, should, upon occasion, be offended by a child's disobeying, or coming short of his duty, in what he was commanded; if the child, upon consideration of his fault, should acknowledge his wrong, and beg forgiveness, would not the parent forgive him?

JUD. Most certainly, he would.

GEN. But, if he did not forgive him, in what light would he appear in the world, amongst his fellow mortals?

JUD. In a most disagreeable light.

GEN. Or, if the child should not designedly, but through inadvertancy, chance to break a small article, of little or no value; and if the parent would not forgive the child, upon asking pardon for his fault, but would oblige him to make restitution, upon pain of death, in what light would this represent the parent?

JUD. In a most dismal light for certain.

GEN. However dismal it may appear, it is infinitely short of that in which they have represented the true God, as if he would not forgive his rational creatures (which is infinitely less, and stands in a more near relation to him, than the child does to the parent) upon an unfeigned repentance, without full restitution, or payment of whatever degrees of debt were contracted by them.

Hence, if a parent would not forgive a child, upon the acknowledgment of his fault; but would put him to death, without payment or full restitution being made for his offence, in what an odious light would such a one appear among men?

This can be no worse; but rather short of that light, in which they have represented the true God, as if he who is their original parent, would not forgive his creatures, upon their repentance, without full restitution or payment being made for their offences. But to proceed,

Now, these are they who pretend, in being not only the best friends, but the very particular favourites of heaven: and yet, after all, it is they who have so much obscured that infinite attribute, and inexpressible goodness of Almighty God. But, was there any that pretended to be a greater friend to Christ, than Judas who betrayed him to death with a kiss? No, certainly not. But, however disagreeable this may appear to men of little and contracted minds, I am bound, by justice, to set the infinite goodness, and other attributes of the eternal

and ever blessed God, in as just and proper a light to the world, as the best of my judgment is capable of.

Hence, whether it be right in the sight of heaven, to please and obey God or men, judge ye. Further, now, in what light is this to represent the ever blessed God, who has proclaimed himself the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquities, transgression and sin, to the repenting sinner, that turneth from the evil thereof. In what light, therefore, is this to represent the most high God, the God of the universe, easy to be offended, and never to be appeased, with less than a full and complete satisfaction: and not only this, but also requiring, not a finite, but an infinite satisfaction, for a finite offence. O horrid blasphemy! that God, who is just, and requires of his rational creatures to forgive one another their trespasses, upon no higher terms, than upon the acknowledgment of their fault, and turning unto them; and yet, he, himself, will not forgive his creatures their faults, without a full and complete satisfaction; or, in other words, except he be more than over-paid, *viz.* an infinite price, for a finite sum, or offence.

Now, to say that God will require a greater action of a rational creature, than what he, himself, is both able and willing to perform, appears to me no less than gross blasphemy: for every doctrine that infringes the attributes of God, or takes away any of these, his different

perfections, is certainly a most dangerous and pernicious doctrine. But, to proceed,

For the better understanding of this subject, I would, therefore, ask this one simple query, which is, Is it possible for a finite being, to produce an infinite action?

JUD. No.

GEN. Is not sin, or what they call vice, an action?

JUD. Yes.

GEN. You have answered well; and, as I apprehend, is what no person can possibly refuse: for an infinite action, is what can never possibly proceed from a finite agent: for if it were in the power of a finite being, to produce but so much as one infinite action, then might it also, by virtue of said power, produce not only one, but thousands; and not only thousands, but even millions of different actions: and, if capable thereof, remained no longer a finite, but an infinite agent; and, if infinite, as observed elsewhere, must, for certain, be above the commission of sin.

Now, since a finite being is incapable of an infinite action, this would be no less, according to said doctrine, than an imputing of injustice to God; as if charging an infinite sum, for that which is nothing more than a finite debt. And not only this; but of one also, who being insolvent, had nothing wherewith he could either pay, or support himself.

It being, therefore, now evident, from what is here exprest, that no offence, committed by a finite agent, can be infinite: for the action

can never possibly exceed the nature of the being, from whom it proceeded. Some, in order to make an offence, committed by a creature, infinite, have made the following supposition. That, if a peasant should spit in the face of his prince, the offence therefore is infinite; because committed against a greater than himself. But this is false; for, as both were finite beings, the offence was, therefore, only a finite action. But, in order to obviate this, that an infinite offence can never possibly be committed by a finite agent, I shall, therefore, lay down the three following queries, with answers thereto.

QUER. 1. Is an offence given by a child, equal to an offence committed by a person of grown age, and of mature judgment?

ANS. No. For instance, should a child, from ignorance or want of judgment, give what is a sufficient cause to offend a person of character, possessed of reason, sense, or judgment, will that offence be equal to an offence committed by a person, whose character is, in every respect, equal to himself? No, by no means. For instance, if one prince was to affront another, was not this offence incomparably greater, than committed by one of low degree? Certainly: for the more equality there is in character, the greater is the offence.

QUER. 2. Was Judas's betraying, or Peter's denying his master, equal to one of the Roman soldier's betraying, or denying him?

ANS. No, it was incomparably greater.

QUER. 3. If a fool or ignorant person, should be guilty of committing an offence against a great prince or personage, would the said offence be equal with one of the same degree?

ANS. No, certainly not: For according as the equality of the persons riseth in degree; so is the offence: and, according as the offence riseth in degree; so doth it merit fewel for its punishment. For, if an inferior should be convicted of an affront done to his superior, and be mortified upon account thereof, self-conviction, and an unfeigned repentance, is that, whereby this fewel is set on fire of itself and exhausted. Now, will ever the offended set that on fire a second time, which is already burnt out? No, not possible. As in the above; so doth it fare in every offence, wherein we come short in doing the will of God: so that, according to its aggravation, it thereby treasurcth up, and meriteth a certain degree of fewel, for the punishment thereof. And, if that fewel, from the conviction of sin, be kindled and set on fire of itself, and thereby exhausted, will ever a just God set that on fire a second time, which is already burnt out? No, not possible. And also, according to the degree of the sinner's repentance; so is the fewel of sin longer or shorter of being consumed. And if not set on fire of itself, by conviction and repentance for sin, or offence committed, it will, therefore, be at last kindled and set on fire by God in way of punishment; where, for want of repentance, it will there

burn without interruption, forever and ever. But self evidence and condemnation for sin, is by far the most satisfactory, above all others, to both God and man: For when conscious of the affront done to Justice, it is thereby mortified, and torments itself; which is incomparably worse than that of another.

But, further, I shall, therefore, illustrate this subject a little, in way of a just and merciful sovereign.

Now, I apprehend, there is no person will refuse, but that every legislator or lawgiver, hath a power to dispense with his own laws, in whatever respect he sees necessary, for the benefit of his subjects, so long as it does not exceed the extent of his right, wherewith he is possest from God. I acknowledge, that murder, according to my judgment (but may be wrong), is rather above a temporal sovereign to forgive; because life is what may partly be called infinite in degree: the reason why; because there is no possibility of its being either given at first, independent of God, or restored by the creature when taken away. But every other thing that is below, or on a level with the sovereign, contained in said laws, the lawgiver has certainly a right to dispence therewith, when for the benefit of his subjects. In like manner, God, who is the rightful sovereign, and supreme lawgiver, has certainly a right to dispense with his own laws, in way of mercy, to the repenting sinner: For this divine attribute, *viz.* Mercy, hath its rightful claim as well as Justice.

Now, if an earthly sovereign hath a power, as legislator, to make and enact laws, for the better regulation and government of his subjects, he, most certainly, as their sovereign, has not only a power, but a right to dispense with these laws, as best suits the good of the state, for the benefit of his subjects. Yet, for certain, there is none else has a rightful power to dispense with said laws, but he alone, who is the lawgiver. If any of his subjects are guilty, in transgressing any of said laws, although the crime thereof should be capital, whether against the subject or his own private person, as in a private capacity, he, who is their sovereign, has certainly a rightful power to dispense with said laws, in forgiving the criminal his transgression. Yet, supposing these laws to be founded upon justice, and he himself, *viz.* the legislator, acting up thereto, if any of his subjects should attack his character, as in a public capacity, so as to lessen his esteem, to the loss of government, in governing his subjects; this crime, by reason of the offence, being of a higher degree, I do not see wherein his Majesty can properly pardon or forgive the criminal, without the concurrence of his subjects: the reason why; because, not only hurtful to his sovereign, in a private capacity, but also to the interest of public government, in his rule of the state.

In like manner, as observed in the above, the great and rightful sovereign of the universe, *viz.* the supreme legislator, may justly dispense with his own laws, either as it concerns him-

self or his creatures, in way of mercy to the repenting sinner; but, whenever it comes to attack or infringe any of his moral attributes, in lessening his esteem, to the hurt of government, in ruling of his creatures, the case certainly alters. For what the apostle calls the sin against the Holy Spirit, is much the same in manner: for it is said to be done in despite of the spirit of grace. And Christ himself seems to favour this opinion: for he saith, that every sin (repented of,) shall be forgiven, except that which is done against the Holy Spirit: And the reason why; because not committed against God as in a private, but in a public capacity, in opposing Christ's mission, which was sealed by the power of the Holy Spirit, in working miracles, to prove his being sent of God, to deliver the world from sin, by restoring them into the knowledge of the one true God; whose nature was altogether misunderstood by some (*viz.* the Jews), and forsaken by others. And though Christ oft-times speaks of the evil nature of sin, he never speaks thereof as being infinite. No, he never does; but always as of a finite nature, consisting of different degrees, equal to their aggravations. For, when speaking of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, to distinguish their guilt, he there tells them, saying, that it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, with Sodom and Gomorrah, at the day of judgment, than for you to whom the gospel has been so freely offered; but have despised it. And likewise, when upon the cross, he prays to

his heavenly Father, that he might forgive them (*viz.* the Jews his bloody persecutors); expressing himself after this manner, "Lay not this sin unto their charge: For they know not what they do." What is here exprest, by Christ, is an undeniable evidence of the finite nature, and different degrees of sin.

But, for the better understanding of this subject, I shall, therefore, next illustrate it, under the character of three different great personages; each thereof possessed of a large estate of fifty thousand *per Annum*. Each of these estates, in order that the owners thereof might receive of their produce, were let out to husbandmen. And as one of these three great personages came to enquire at his steward, concerning the estate, and how it fared with his husbandmen, expecting to have received his due, the steward told his lordship, that, from no neglect of business, or industry, but from the inclemency of the seasons, and the necessity of their small and rising families, some of which were become insolvent; therefore, were unable to pay his lordship his due. His lordship no sooner hearing of this, but immediately ordered, that each thereof should be called for to pay what was owing of his bill. The steward having, therefore, done as was commanded him; but finding them unable to pay what was due, his lordship, tho' they begging his patience, caused him to seize on their effects; and if not sufficient, to strip every soul thereof, and their families, as naked as when they came into the world; and that

money be made thereof, till the very last farthing due, be paid up. And not only this; but that each thereof should likewise be ejected from their house, or place of habitation: this being done, the sum was therefore paid; but not one farthing over to succour their lives. Each thereof being thus exposed to the inclemency of the weather, a severe night of frost and snow ensued, upon which account, they were all, before to-morrow, reduced to dead corps.

Now, whoever, therefore, is for strict and positive justice, here it comes to be executed to the full. But none can say, that he had exceeded the rules of what they call strict or positive justice. No.

The first scene being therefore past, the next great personage comes to enquire at his steward, how it fared with his husbandmen; he, like the other, answering, told his lordship, that from no neglect of business or industry, but from the inclemency of the seasons, and the number of their small and rising families, some of which husbandmen were become insolvent; therefore, were incapable to pay his lordship his due. He, like the other, no sooner hearing thereof, but immediately gave orders to call for payment; and if payment be not made, to seize on their effects. And if not sufficient, to strip every soul thereof, and their families, as naked as when they came into the world; and that money be made thereof: and if yet lacking of said sum, that they and their families be sold, till the very

last farthing thereof, be paid up. His lordship's son, no sooner hearing of this, but immediately contracts and agrees, with the father, to pay the debt for a certain number thereof, without so much as being either desired or asked in their behalf.

This no sooner done; but justice immediately cries out, of her being not only wronged, but despised, as if she were become an unjust or partial attribute of God. Justice being, therefore, answered, that, as the debt being paid, she had nothing to crave. Justice, in her turn, said, if I should take from one a sum in payment for the debt of another, then I behoved to cease from being just. And if I should take a debt, at the expence of one, that was due by another, then, I, for certain, would become both partial and unjust; and thereby laid under perpetual ignominy for ever. This is not all. No: for Mercy, in her turn, cries out next of her being wronged and thereby dispossessed of her due: upon which account, she complains, saying, I have been prostrated to such who have neither acknowledged their fault in despising of justice, nor craved my assistance in their deliverance: and yet, after all, riots upon my bounty, without either liberty asked, or indulgence granted thereto by me. And not only this; but from the greatest part of mankind, I am, as it were, shut up from their assistance, although they should apply to, and lie prostrate before me.

From this we see here, that both justice and

mercy, cry out of their being wronged, and is what they can by no means dispense with, independent of an unavoidable confusion.

The former two, being therefore now past, a third and last great personage draws nigh, and begins to enquire at his steward, concerning the estate, and how it fared with his husbandmen. He, like the other two, answering, told his lordship, That from no neglect of business, or industry, nor riotous living, but from the inclemency of the seasons, and necessity of their numerous, small, and rising families, some of which husbandmen, were become insolvent; therefore, incapable to pay his lordship his due. Upon hearing thereof, he asked his steward, what was to be done. The steward, answering, said that his lordship was certainly the best and only judge in that affair. Upon this, he immediately ordered to send for those husbandmen, and told them what was required of them, that each thereof should pay what was due, or owing of their bill. Upon this they immediately fell down before him, acknowledging the justness of the debt, telling his lordship the different reasons why they owed him so much; and that it was not from an unwillingness to pay, but only from an inability: and that if his lordship would but have patience, and spare them, they, if possible, would pay him all. Upon this the son, who was heir to the estate, asked his lordship if he would accept of him for the debt. He, answering, told him, that he had nothing that he could call his own: for

that both he, and all that he possessed, were his already. And besides all this, did he imagine, that either he or any other person, was capable of doing a greater action in forgiving a debt due by another, than he himself. And upon this, he frankly forgave them all that debt, which was a sum far exceeding both the other two.

Now, in which of all these three, was justice mostly honoured, and the dignity thereof kept up? Not in the first, because he exacted the full, and stript them of all, and admitted of no reward to be paid them for their labour, by which justice came to be over-done: neither in the second, because in the debt paid to, and received by the creditor, both justice and mercy were not only slighted, but even despised without measure: and the reason why; because the object, upon whom mercy was bestowed, had never so much as called for her assistance. But the latter forgave them all that debt, which laid each thereof under an inexpressible obligation to him that forgave them. But, where positive justice is exacted, and executed to the full, no obligation remains, nor is due to the creditor, since the positive demands of the law are fulfilled.

The first of these three, express'd under the name of strict or positive justice, is the sense in which justice was understood, and taken up by the ancient heathens, in the Pagan world.

The second is the sense in which justice is taken up and understood, among those who are only heathens, and mongrel christians, *viz.*

such who have never as yet been able to form proper notions of the true God, nor of his justice.

The third and last thereof, is the sense in which justice is taken up and understood, by real or true christians; and is entirely agreeable to the nature of that justice which comes from God, in which we are taught in the gospel, by Jesus Christ and his apostles. For, to separate justice from mercy, or mercy from justice, would not only destroy, but would thereby put a final end to both.

JUD. But if the law is not executed upon the offender, and fulfilled by punishing the transgressor, justice comes to be wronged; and the law is thereby slighted, because not satisfied.

GEN. In answer to your objection, there is no legislator or lawgiver whatever, that maketh laws for the better regulation of his subjects, but what hath an unlimited power to dispense with either, in executing the said laws upon the transgressor; or of pardoning the penitent offender, as he himself sees proper, without the very least offence or wrong done to justice; because he that giveth a law, hath a power to dispense with either, in punishing the transgressor, or in forgiving the penitent offender, as he himself sees fit.

The above answers in all respects, so far as the law can, by justice, be brought under the power of the lawgiver. And there is none either can, or hath it in their power, to dispense in forgiving the offender, but the lawgiver himself.

Now, as God is the great Legislator, and supreme Lawgiver, there is none hath a power to forgive in breaking of his law, but he himself. But, as God is the great Legislator, he hath it entirely in his own power, to pardon the penitent and repenting sinner, wherein he hath transgressed his law, without the least wrong done to justice.* An instance thereof, may be seen from the Mosaic institutions, and is as follows.

If one person, under that government, wronged another, in taking from, and making that his own, which was his neighbour's property? if he, from an after-thought, was thereby not only convicted and accused, but condemned of himself, acknowledging his fault; he, to indemnify whatever loss had been sustained on account thereof, was therefore only to return one fifth part, besides the sum or value of that which he had carried away? But, if the aggressor concealed the fraud, till discovered and detected by the owner, or him that was aggrieved, he was not only to pay the sum, and one fifth more, but was obliged to return five-fold to the owner thereof; which was nineteen times more than him that was convicted, and became his own accuser, in condemning himself.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that the law was infinitely more honoured, and justice satisfied by him who accused and condemned himself, than by him that concealed the fraud, till detected, accused, and condemned by the judge, at the

instance of the owner. From hence it follows, that the law is thereby more honoured, and justice satisfied, in forgiving one penitent and repenting sinner, who was convicted, accused, and condemned of himself, than the accusing, condemning, and punishing of nineteen incorrigible sinners, or obstinate offenders. Agreeable to the above, it is, therefore, express'd by Jesus Christ, saying, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;" and also, "If thy brother offend thee, and if he repent and turn unto thee, thou shalt forgive him." And likewise, as express'd by the prophet, saying, "That if the wicked shall repent of his wickedness, and turn from the evil of his way, his iniquity shall be blotted out, and shall be remembered no more against him." And also, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto the Lord and live; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

It is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that the highest satisfaction required by God, to satisfy his justice, is, a sincere and an unfeigned repentance for sin, in forsaking iniquity, by living in obedience to his will. But such as are weak, little, and contracted mortals, would limit God in such a manner, as not to dispence with his justice in the pardon of sin; and likewise, forbid justice being satisfied, without the punishment of the offender. Thus, by circumscribing his goodness, they would have God, in every respect, as unforgiving and implacable as themselves.

But, further, I shall, therefore, next essay to point out the true and real nature of that justice, which God requires of his rational creatures. Thus, we are not, therefore, to imagine of its being of a strict or positive nature, stript of, or exclusive of mercy—No: for it were just as absurd to require absolute perfection of a finite or imperfect being, as to require the creating of matter out of nothing, by a finite agent: for infinite, or absolute perfection, can never possibly proceed from, or be produced by any but an infinite being; therefore, can never possibly come under that of strict or positive justice. But, for the better understanding thereof, Is it not express elsewhere, by the Jewish Lawgiver, “An eye, for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;” but this was certainly only required in way of terror, when people were beginning to emerge from out of heathenish darkness. Thus, for instance, if two persons should strive together, and if one of them should come to lose an eye, or a tooth, in the strife, by the other person that was contending with him: if he that was guilty of this deed, should be self-convicted of the evil done, and loss which the other had received by him, and should come and acknowledge his fault, for the loss he had sustained, and should crave his pardon, for that wherein he had wronged him; and upon this his repentance, he forgives him—The case is this, whether he that had lost the eye, or the tooth, had a right to forgive him, or not; or was it right to forgive him?

JUD. He certainly had a right to forgive him. And upon the acknowledgment of his fault, and being sorry for his loss, it was certainly right to forgive him.

GEN. But, if it shall be said, that justice was not satisfied, by reason of the penalty not being exacted, and executed upon the offender, I shall, therefore, suppose, that if the person that was forgiven by the other, should come to strive with another, or second person; and if he shall chance to lose an eye, or only a tooth, in the strife, by that other person; and if he who was guilty thereof, should be sensible of the loss which the other that had strove with him, had sustained by him, and should thereupon acknowledge his fault, and beg his forgiveness, for the wrong done him; but if he that had suffered the loss, would by no means pardon nor pass from his claim he had against him, but required that strict and positive justice should, for the eye, or tooth, he had lost, be executed to the full, by pulling out the eye, or breaking of a tooth from the offender. This, I acknowledge, is what no doubt would satisfy all such who require and delight in what they call Pagan or heathenish justice; but not the justice of the true God.

From hence, the only term that can be either given, or applied, to what they call strict or positive justice without mercy, is what may rather be called, strict or positive revenge.

JUD. But, if we forgive one another, and no punishment be required, this would encourage vice, in expecting to be forgiven:

such as the putting out of an eye, a tooth, or the like; since no retaliation was to be required by the plaintiff.

GEN. In answer to your objection, If one should lose an eye, a tooth, or what not, by the folly of another, though not requiring that the eye of him who has been guilty thereof, should be pulled out in return, in way of revenge; yet, he ought, by all means, to refund him for the loss, or want of what he may sustain thereby; or even whatever loss any one person may sustain by the folly of another. Hence, he who has suffered, either in person, or in effects, ought certainly to be refunded upon account thereof; both for the sake of justice, and lest people should wantonly commit evil for evil's sake.

But, further, to illustrate this subject, If his Majesty should on an occasion, appoint two of his admirals, each thereof having the command of a fleet, with positive orders given them, in their expedition; and with an express direction, that they should be at their appointed station against such a day, and such an hour, with this encouragement, that each thereof, should have one thousand sterling, exclusive of his pay; but failing the appointed day, no extraordinary reward. And, if one should prove one day short of the other; he, on account thereof, shall not only lose his reward, but shall be expelled his service for ever. And if they should both fail at one hour, with one wind, and one tide, if the one thereof should be at their destined place at the appointed

hour, and the other should come exactly one day short, if his Majesty should be pleased to give to him that arrived, at the intended place, against the appointed day, ten thousand sterling, instead of one thousand, is justice thereby wronged? No, certainly not: or, if he should give to him that arrived one day short of his orders, who had thereby forfeited his reward, the thousand sterling, being the sum promised him, upon his performance: and not only this, but continued him in his service, had justice any reason to complain? No, certainly not: for justice can never possibly be hurt, nor receive any harm from good, but from evil. For instance, if the law should annex a certain penalty, *viz.* two years imprisonment, and no more, for a certain fault or offence committed against the state; and if the judge shall be possessed of a discretionary power for good; and if he shall judge, and sentence the offender, by, or at the desire of him, or them, that had been offended (from the wrong wherewith he, or they, had been injured), in three years imprisonment, in place of two, was not justice thereby injured?

JUD. Certainly.

GEN. But if the judge, at the solicitation of him that had been wronged, or upon the penitency of the offender, should be so good as to judge and sentence him only in one year's imprisonment, in place of two annexed thereto by law, was justice wronged thereby?

JUD. Certainly not.

GEN. You have answered well; but to whom shall we now apply for proof to solve this point, in stating the nature of justice aright, but to Jesus Christ, who came with a full and ample commission, to declare the will, and whole counsel of God, for the good and salvation of men. Now, was justice wronged, when the lord of that servant, as in Matth. xxxv. did not only give unto him the five talents he had acquired, but the other five also, which made ten?

JUD. No, by no means.

GEN. You have answered justly: Has not, therefore, every one a right to dispose of his own, for good, to whomsoever he will, when his procedure therein by no means becomes a loss, or hurtful to another? The forgiving him, as in the above, by whom he had lost his eye, or tooth, was no loss to him who had already suffered, in the eye or tooth he had lost. And the depriving the offender, of either eye or tooth, in way of strict or positive justice, made no restitution to the other, in restoring to him the tooth, or eye, which he had lost in the scuffle; but served only as a Pagan, or heathen satisfaction, required only in way of strict or positive revenge: or was justice hurt, or received she any harm by the Lord of that servant, who owed his master ten thousand talents, when he and his household, and all that he had, was to be sold for payment; and yet upon nothing more than his humbly requesting him to have patience, and he would pay what he owed him? and upon this, he had com-

passion, and frankly forgave him all that debt? Now, certainly justice received no harm, or else our Lord had never approved of the action.

Hence, the estimate of the above sum, is as follows, one talent being in value one hundred and eighty-seven pounds, ten shillings sterling, the sum total, is 1,875,000, sterling; which declares expressly, of no sum being too great for almighty God to forgive.

But this will appear more evident from what follows, where we see, that when the said servant, who was forgiven such an immense sum, had found his fellow-servant, which owed him only the poor petty sum of an hundred pence, there he immediately took hold of him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and humbly besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

Hence, we here see, from the above, that this servant did not only require payment, but caused strict and positive justice, to be executed to the full, upon him who was his fellow-servant: but for this exaction, God, in his justice, complains of his being wronged; and as a proof of which, he was taken by him who had forgiven him such an immense sum, and cast into prison for redress, where he was doomed to lie, till he should pay the very last farthing of said debt, which he owed to his lord, who, in his goodness, had forgiven him freely. Now, from this it ap-

pears evident, that what is called strict or positive justice, exclusive of mercy, is not the justice of God: for God no where, in that in which he maketh himself known, has parted justice from mercy, especially, to the humble, the penitent, and repenting sinner. No, certainly not: for God never executes positive justice, except where mercy has been utterly despised.

From hence, it is therefore now fully evident, from the above, that strict and positive justice, independent of mercy, is not the justice of the true God; but only they who are the votaries of heathen idols, or false gods (who can show no mercy); and of such as adhere to lying vanities.

Further, and to proceed, In treating of this subject, concerning strict or positive justice, I shall therefore suppose a person comes to be apprehended for a debt: a second person comes, after his being confined, by virtue and power of law, and pays the debt due to the creditor. The law being, therefore, satisfied, he, by virtue of which payment, requires that the debtor be set at liberty: and very justly he may; because he, *viz.* the creditor, hath got the sum, for which the debtor was apprehended, paid up, which is all he could require: but where stands strict and positive justice now, in receiving payment of a sum from one, of whom it was not due, even in payment of a debt, which was only due by another: Partial justice indeed! that, if she be paid, does not regard at whose expence; that,

if she be in pocket, cares not who be out of pocket. But strict and positive justice, can never possibly be satisfied, while the debt remains unpaid by the principal to the surety: for without the sum be paid by the debtor, or forgiven by the creditor, positive justice can never possibly be satisfied: for if the debt be not paid up by the debtor, or forgiven by the creditor, although that it should pass through ten thousand sureties, the debt still remains unpaid: for if the debt be not paid by the debtor, or forgiven by the creditor, it can never either be paid nor forgiven by another, nor cease from being a debt.

From hence it follows, that, if the surety had been taken in at the contracting of the debt or bond due, there had certainly been more excuse; because the debtor might therefore be supposed to have got credit, only, upon account of the surety. But to accept of one as a surety, for payment of a lost sum, when the debt, or case thereof, was become desperate; and to exact the payment of said sum of the surety, when lost, is no less than a piece of the highest injustice, that can possibly either be conceived, or yet take place.

But further, If one person, through a pre-conceived prejudice, should lie in wait against an inoffensive or innocent person, from whom he had received no offence; and should fall upon him, either when asleep, or when he was not aware thereof; and should murder and put him to death; and for which crime, he is very justly apprehended, judged, and

sentenced to die: an innocent person comes, and not only proffers his life for him, but even dies in his room and stead. Now, from this you would suppose, that there is no doubt of the law being fulfilled, and the debt paid, when life is gone for life: but is it possible that positive justice can be satisfied with the life of the innocent, in place of the life of the murderer or guilty person? No, not possible: or, if satisfied therewith, she could be no more positive, but partial justice.

Again, I shall suppose of their being three different species of rational beings, one thereof five thousand degrees above the other, the third ten thousand degrees above the first.

The second, who was five thousand degrees above the first, comes to murder one of his fellow species; upon this, justice takes hold of him, judges, and also passes sentence of death upon him for his crime; upon this, one of the first or lowest of these different species, comes, and offers up his life a ransom, in place of the criminal: But justice rejects the offer; because not of equal quality. The third, or last person, who was ten thousand degrees above the first, comes next, and offers up his life a ransom for the criminal of five thousand degrees above the first—This is no sooner done, than his life is accepted of, and he is thereby executed and put to death, in place of the criminal; by virtue of which, the guilty person is thereby set at liberty. Strange! strange-positive justice indeed! who will not accept of a satisfaction, less than

the whole or equal value; and yet, after all, receive a sum upon account thereof, five thousand times above what was due. Now, if he will not be satisfied with one pound less than the sum, far less with near five thousand below. Strange justice indeed! that can easily dispense in receiving a sum or satisfaction, in way of payment, four thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine times, or rather five thousand, above what was due; and yet accept of nothing less than the whole.

The sum of this overcharge, they acknowledge, though not in the same words; for they tell us, that the satisfaction made, and price that justice received, is sufficient to pay the debt, and satisfy not only for our sins, but for the sins of ten thousand worlds besides. And by this they imagine of doing honour to God, in pretending to magnify his justice; but instead of magnifying his justice, she is thereby diminished, by making her partial, in accepting of a sum for payment of a debt, ten thousand times above the debt contracted, or was due by the debtor. Nor do they stop here—No; but even after all, when justice is ten thousand times more than satisfied, they again add an imputed righteousness, additional to the former satisfaction (ten thousand times above what was due), before they can be accepted of God. But do they not know, that even amongst men, abstract from God, the taking one farthing of interest more than what is due, or two securities for one debt, forfeits the sum. Rare theology indeed! to

rob one attribute of God, on purpose to compliment another, by their pretending to magnify justice: but alas! at no less expence than both her own; where, to her loss, she is made to appear as if acting in the most unjustifiable character of every other being, to the expulsion of mercy.

In treating on this subject, I shall hereby suppose a certain nobleman, who was taking account of his servants, and finding by his steward, that one thereof was become insolvent, and therefore incapable to pay his bill: the nobleman, hearing of this failure, ordered the steward, that he who was become insolvent, should immediately be sent for, which accordingly was done: the servant, therefore, came as ordered by the steward; and upon this his lord required that he should pay up his bill, which consisted of fifty pounds sterling, answerable to his agreement. The servant upon this, told his lordship, that, as the case now stood, according to his present circumstances, he was altogether incapable; but pled that he would have patience, and he would pay him all. But his lordship would not; but commanded that he and his household should be sold, and that payment should be made: upon this the servant fell down before his lord, and said, Have patience, and I will pay thee all: but he would not; but persisted that he, and his wife and children, should be sold, and that payment should be made. Upon this, one of his fellow-servants came and paid down the money for him; but when the money

came to be weighed, one of which pieces being found wanting, lacked one penny: he therefore would not accept; but insisted that the very last farthing thereof should be paid. But as this was all the servant had or was possessed of, a second fellow-servant, but having no less change than a bill, or piece of money, which consisted of one thousand sterling, which he offered upon account thereof, that his fellow-servant and household might be released and set at freedom: which sum, was accepted of by his lord; and by virtue thereof, both servant and household were set at liberty. We here see, from the above, of his lord being so exact, that he would not accept of so much as one penny, on behalf of the poor bankrupt, less than the sum; and yet, after all, made not the smallest scruple or hesitation in accepting, not only of one penny, but of nineteen times above, or 228,000 pence, more than the just sum.

Further, as concerning the nature of justice, I apprehend there is nothing in the human world that has been worse misunderstood. For which cause, I shall, therefore, animadvert a little upon the nature of this subject; and thereby open up the true and proper meaning, whereof it consists.

Justice, according to the received opinion of both the Jews and Pagan world, could never possibly be satisfied, with less than a complete restitution made to him who had been offended: this is not only the opinion received by the ancient heathens, but has also been a-

dopted by such as, both Jews and mongrel christians.

Hence, that justice should be satisfied, is certainly right; but as concerning the nature of that satisfaction required, has been altogether misunderstood. There is no doubt, but that every offence given, lays justice under an indispensable obligation, to require satisfaction for the offence committed: for without justice be satisfied, the offender, of necessity, must still remain a debtor thereto. Having, therefore, taken notice of what may be called the due right of justice, I shall next, therefore, touch upon the nature of the satisfaction required: for, according to the nature of the offence committed, so doth it bring along with it the sentence of condemnation, due thereto from justice. For if mercy were not always attending, on purpose to interpose, and suspend the blow, justice, no doubt, would immediately be put in execution against the offender. Thus, mercy intercedes with justice, for to delay and put off the sentence and execution thereof, against the sinner: desiring, if possible, she may await, and thereby effect his repentance. Yet though justice, through the intercession of mercy, may wait long for satisfaction, she will not wait always; but will, according to her delay, be executed at last, with just all that more rigour upon the obstinate offender. But when the offender, through conviction, becomes conscious of his guilt, and repenting of the evil; he, being deeply humbled for the wrong done to justice, intercedes for pardon,

and thereby obtains forgiveness. Thus the offender, when duely sensible of the offence, and convinced of the evil thereof; he, being heartily sorry and grieved for his iniquity, does not only accuse, but thereby condemns himself, as guilty, for the affront done to justice. When this is the case, his unfeigned repentance hath, in every degree, as high a claim upon justice to be assuaged, and absolved from the punishment due thereto, as he who was offended, had a claim upon justice to punish the offender, for the offence committed against him. Thus, justice is, in every respect, as much indebted to acquit the penitent and repenting sinner, from the punishment due, as to punish the unrepenting and obstinate offender. A sincere and unfeigned repentance, and an offence unrepented of, are of equal merit with justice: for the right due to the one, is, in every degree, equal to the claim made by the other.

From hence it follows, that justice is, in every respect, as much satisfied in pardoning and acquitting the repenting sinner, as in punishing the obstinate offender.

From this, it is now evident, that both justice and mercy, have their equal share in the salvation of sinners; and not one of either, is wronged by another.

This is what entirely agrees with that which is said to be exprest by Jesus Christ, in Luke xvii. 3, 4. “ If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive

“ him. And if he trespass against thee seven
“ times in a day, and seven times in a day turn
“ again unto thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt
“ forgive him.” From this, it is again evident,
that justice is, in every degree, just as much
under the same indispensable obligation to acquit,
and set free the repenting sinner, as to inflict
punishment upon the obstinate offender. And if
this was not the case, Christ, for certain, had
never required of us to forgive our neighbour
his offence, wherein he hath trespassed
against us, upon his repentance and acknowledgment
of the wrong he had committed, by turning
therefrom unto us. For we are not to imagine,
that Christ would require of us that, of which
justice did not approve. No; by no means.

Hence, there is no action, whether good,
bad, or indifferent, but what hath its merit
annexed thereto, either of reward or of punishment.
Now, therefore, if the offence merit
punishment at the hand of justice, repentance
must inevitably merit forgiveness. But
to proceed,

Now, since there be a debt due to every
action, and also an inseparable merit annexed
thereto, if it be a debt due by justice, to
punish the offence, reward is, in every degree,
as much due to an act of unfeigned repentance;
which is the chief punishment required for the
offence committed.

But, further, if punishment be the merit
which is due to the offence, repentance being
the punishment required, forgiveness, for cer-

tain, must be the reward, and infallible right due thereto. And if forgiveness be not the just right of repentance, punishment is no longer due to the offence: and if punishment be not due to the offence, justice is no more justice; but only what may be called a shadow without a substance, or a sound without meaning.

Hence, one thing certain, we may be assured of, that every action, as has been observed, whether good, bad, or indifferent, hath its merit, either of reward or punishment, annexed thereto. For instance, if a person is pleased to do me a kindness, does he not thereby make me a debtor to reward him for the kindness done to me? Or, if one should do me a prejudice; and if he repent thereof, and beg of me to forgive him his offence, does not his repentance and turning therefrom, lay me under an express obligation to forgive him, upon account thereof? Most certainly it does: for if I do not forgive, I can by no means be forgiven.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that repentance, and self-condemnation, are equivalent to the offence; and is not only a complete, but the express satisfaction required by Jesus Christ, from the offender, as due to the person offended (by virtue of which satisfaction, the variance is thereby removed; and being reconciled, they again are united, the same as before the offence took place): upon which account, the person offended is thereby laid

under an indispensable obligation to forgive him, from whom he received the offence. It is, therefore, now obvious, that if he who was offended, did not forgive the offender, upon his sincere repentance, the acknowledgment of his fault, and wrong done to him (which being sustained by God, as a complete satisfaction to justice, for the offence done to her), that if he who was offended, did not forgive the offender, as required of him by God, the offence being punished according to justice, the penitent offender is thereby acquitted, and set free from the punishment required; and the claim which justice had before upon the offender, is thereby transferred over upon the head of him who obstinately refused to forgive his penitent brother. Therefore, according to the strict rules of justice, he, by refusing to forgive the penitent, lies as much exposed to punishment, as the offender himself did before his repentance. To this, it may be objected, that if one person should take away the life of another, if he, according to the above doctrine, should sincerely repent of the murder, the law is not to be executed against him. But, in answer to this objection, if he who received the wrong had been in life, the case would have been equally the same, as in the above. But, as he being dismissed from life by the offender, there was none remained alive, that could possibly forgive him the offence committed. And since none were left alive, that could forgive him that offence, his life, therefore, behoved to be cut off, in way of

punishment for the offence which he committed: for there is no possibility of one personating another, in forgiving an offence, but he alone, against whom the offence was committed. And as the due, or first right of life, being only from God, God may very justly, upon an unfeigned repentance of the sinner, pardon his sin; but he, by his taking away the life of him against whom the crime was committed, of necessity, must fall a prey unto the punishment, due to him for his offence. For, as no person, according to justice, can forgive the offender, but he against whom the offence was committed; neither can a murderer be forgiven, because he hath banished from life, the person who had it in his power to forgive. Further, and as the murderer can never possibly hurt the soul, God, upon an unfeigned repentance, is both able and willing to forgive the soul thereof.

Hence, it may, therefore, be again objected, that if every offence is to be forgiven, upon the repentance of the offender, it may, therefore, be supposed, that when a woman is espoused to an husband, if she should chance to fall in with a second lover, besides him to whom she was espoused, and if they both should be found in the act together, and if the woman, by reason of her being detected, should repent of her adultery; the husband is therefore bound to forgive her the said offence, and is not to put her away, but she is to remain still with him as his wife. But, in answer to this objection, the circumstance is

altogether different ; because this offence does not only strike against the husband, in particular, but also against his posterity : for if the offence was only hurtful to himself alone, and not to his issue, he could very justly forgive her : but as it strikes against the interest and right of his posterity, the offence, therefore, can never possibly be forgiven ; because no person can possibly forgive an offence, that is hurtful to a person, or takes away, and infringes the right or interest of another. For as none can forgive the wrong, but the person offended, neither can the adulterers be forgiven ; because the person wronged in his interest, may perhaps be not yet born or brought into life, for some generations to come. For instance, if the first, second, or whatever number of children, in said family, were begot in adultery, and the husband possessed of a large fortune or estate, the adulterous child or children, by reason of the first lawful child being perhaps removed, or by reason of others of the said children dying, till it came to the adulterous child, or posterity thereof, it, or they, inevitably became heir to the said estate ; whereby all the rest of the said lawfully begotten children, or posterity thereof, were deprived, and thereby robbed of their just right, not only by their adulterous mother, but also by the husband, or father of said children, tolerating her adultery, in not putting her away.

Further, although the husband may chance to be of mean circumstances ; yet money or

estate, may fall to him or his issue, in course, as they being the rightful heirs of said parent. Likewise, some of his own children, or posterity, may, by acquiring a fortune, make an estate; and yet, by reason of death, as observed in the above, this adulterous child, or its posterity, may not only deprive, but disinherit all the said children or posterity, which originally descended from the foresaid husband, of whatever property or estate was due thereto.

JUD. But if I am laid under a necessity to forgive my brother, as in the above, upon his repentance and turning unto me; if repentance entitles him to be forgiven, he may first steal me out of my substance, and then repent, and require of me to forgive him.

GEN. In answer to your objection, if the offender have it in his power to restore either the whole, or any part thereof, his repentance is altogether vain, and of no effect to crave pardon, without restitution, if possesse thereof, as in the above. For an unfeigned repentance is to make restitution, if possesse of whatever part, and is heartily sorry, if not in his power to do it: for to keep back one farthing, or whatever part of the sum, if in his power to make restitution, cuts off his claim thereto: for if we regard sin in our heart, God will not hear our prayers.

From hence, what is here exprest, in the above, will, I apprehend, be found sufficient to answer all that has been observed, in the foresaid objection against the right of repen-

tance, of forgiveness being the reward annexed thereto. A further objection may be made against the offender being forgiven his offence, upon his repentance and turning therefrom; Which is as follows,

Will not the wicked in a future state, by repenting of their ill spent lives, and rejecting the long sparing mercy and offers of forgiveness made to them upon their repentance, forsaking of sin, and amendment of life, merit reward? But, in answer to this objection, as the time of their probationary state being over and winded up, their state being unalterably fixed, there will be no room left for repentance, because of their despising the same, when offered to them in life, besides their love to, and continuation in sin.

From this, it appears evident, that this objection must, therefore, of necessity, fall in course with those of the former, that were made before it.

But, further, there is no action, whether good, bad, or indifferent; yea, the most secret thoughts of the heart not excepted, but what hath its proper merit annexed thereto. It is upon this very basis, wherein it is said, though misunderstood, that no sin can possibly be so great, but what the misbelieving of God being willing to pardon it, is a greater offence to him, than the sin itself: and the reason why; because it not only mistrusts God's veracity, but calls his justice in question, in believing that he is willing to punish an evil action, or actions, viz. our offences, but not

willing to reward that of our repentance, which he hath expressly required of us; and hath not only promised, but has assured us of the reward annexed thereto by justice. In so doing, they mistrust God, and thereby make him unjust, as one that is ready to punish evil, but not willing to reward that which is good.

The above is a solution of that divine harmony, which subsists betwixt these two different attributes of God, *viz.* his mercy, whose office it is to intercede in putting off, and delaying the execution of the sentence, in order to bring about, and await the repentance of the sinner: and also justice, whose office it is to give unto every one their due, or merit, annexed to every particular action, whether good or bad. For an infallible proof of this doctrine, there is nothing can possibly be more obvious, within the creation of God, than what this is laid down, and expressly required of us in the New Testament, by Jesus Christ, to forgive one another our trespasses. And that, if we do not forgive one another, it is declared by God, that he will by no means forgive us.

Hence, is it possible that a parent would require of his children, to forgive wherein they had, or may have offended one another (requiring no greater satisfaction, upon account thereof, than only the bare acknowledgment of their fault); and yet, he himself would not so much as forgive them, *viz.* his children, the least offence, that chanced to take place contrary to his command, without complete res-

titution, or even more than what was due in the failure thereof. No, not possible; Or if he did, behoved therefore rather to be a tyrant than a parent.

From hence, is it possible, that he who is our original parent, the God of the universe, would require of us to forgive one another our offences, upon the bare acknowledgment of our fault; and yet, he himself would not forgive us, his fallible creatures, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him? No, not possible.

Hence, from this it is evident, that justice is as much, in every respect, under the same indispensable obligation to forgive the penitent, and confirm the sentence against such as will not forgive one another their offences (committed against them), as to punish the obstinate sinner. Whoever desires a further detection of the above doctrine, that God will by no means pardon sin upon the repentance of the sinner, may read Matth. xviii. 21. to the end; and also Luke xvii. 3, 4. as observed in the above, with whatever refers thereto.

From hence, we are, therefore, by no means to imagine, that believing, or the performance of one duty or part of the law, can atone or merit satisfaction for the neglect or breach of another. No; yea, there is nothing can satisfy for the offence done to justice, but an unfeigned repentance, for the breach of said law. No: neither can fasting, dreeing of penance, and the like, profit, or merit for-

giveness in the sight of God. No: for justice can never possibly be satisfied, with less than an unfeigned repentance, for the offence committed.

Now, therefore, let us not give place to either prejudice or envy; but forgive: for if we heartily forgive one another, and unfeignedly repent of our offences, whether committed against God or man, pleading from each the forgiveness thereof, God in his justice, as the reward due thereto, promised by Jesus Christ, will most certainly forgive us. But further.

In discoursing upon this subject, you will, therefore, answer me, as follows.

Whether is justice a dependent, or an independent quality?

JUD. Justice being an attribute of God, must, therefore, depend upon him for its existence.

GEN. Since Justice is a dependent quality, whether, then, is Christ equal with the Supreme God, or is he not equal?

JUD. An equality is oft-times rejected, but universally acknowledged and received, by all such as believe therein.

GEN. If there is no difference in equality, the one from the other, this attribute of justice, is, for certain, the equal, and undivided prerogative of both; and if equal, then, no satisfaction could have been paid thereto by the one, more than the other.

JUD. To me, it appears in a quite different light,

GEN. Make your light therefore shine, that others may partake of it.

JUD. I am, therefore, happy to answer your request, and is as follows.

A person who was become insolvent, being seized upon by his chief creditor, on purpose that he should make restitution of the sum which he owed him; and having nothing to pay, he ordered him to be cast into prison, where he was to ly till the debt was paid: he being therefore sent to goal, a friend meets him at the door of the prison, and there pays down every farthing of said sum, he rested his creditor; upon which account, the debtor was thereby set at liberty.

GEN. A poor argument indeed! as may be understood, from the following observation.

Two persons being in partnership, and in looking over their books, found a certain debtor which owed them a capital sum, of ten thousand sterling: and being sent for, in order to make payment, to their surprize, they found he was become bankrupt; and having nothing to pay, one of which creditors caused him to be thrown into goal, where he was doomed to ly, till he should pay the utmost farthing of said debt; but the other partner pled in his behalf, that, as he had nothing to pay, the debt should be forgiven him; but prevailed nothing in his behalf, as nothing could prevail with him in his favours, the other still insisting that he should be cast into prison, where he should ly till the utmost farthing, of said debt, was paid. The other partner

still pled in his behalf; but when he found that nothing could prevail, he at last laid out for him the whole sum, and paid the debt; by virtue of which payment, the debtor was thereby set at liberty. (Mark this), Though the clerk, or he who was servant to the company, received the ten thousand sterling; but as the stock of both being an equal concern, there was only one half of that sum could answer in payment of said debt: for no sum, laid out by the creditor, to answer for a debt owing to himself, can possibly go for payment, but only in way of forgiveness: for no money can possibly be given in way of payment, except it go to a separate interest.

From this it is evident, that, if Christ be equal with the Supreme God, justice, who must be an equal prerogative of both, could receive no more than a half satisfaction; because what is laid out by the creditor, for a bankrupt, to answer for a sum owing to himself, can never possibly go for the payment of that debt, but only as in way of forgiving the sum due, owing him: for there is nothing can possibly be more vain, than to alledge that one can possibly be both the payer, and receiver of the debt.

From this it is further evident, that what is there asserted (by the votaries of that system) to have been paid as a satisfaction, to appease offended justice, one half thereof, what they call payment, would have been real forgiveness; because of its returning only to him alone, by whom it was paid or laid out. Thus

have they represented the Supreme God, the God of the universe, by their sophistical arguments, as one, when offended, who will by no means either forgive without restitution, nor accept of less than the whole.

It being, therefore, now evident, that no person can possibly pay a debt owing to himself; but may, if he pleases forgive the sum.

JUD. But Christ gave his life a ransom, as a complete payment to God, for the sins of men.

GEN. If Christ paid the debt of sin, why is it said that God pardons iniquity? or why, if God has received ample payment of the debt of sin, do men therefore apply to him, on account thereof?

Hence, if Christ had paid the debt of sin for us to God, it would be grossly absurd to say, that God pardons iniquity; or yet to apply to God, to whom the price thereof had been already paid, that he might forgive us, after having received payment, and discharged the debt: for 'tis not only absurd, but an insult, to seek pardon from a creditor, after he has received payment, and discharged the debt; because when the creditor is paid, he has no farther claim upon the debtor. Therefore, to say that God is paid by Christ, for the sins of men; and also, that God pardons sinners, after having received payment, is not only absurd, but an insult upon his justice: for when once a debt is paid, pardon can never possibly ensue: or if the debt is forgiven, no payment, above gratitude, is farther due; because pay-

ment satisfies the creditor for the debt: and if the debt is forgiven, pardon puts an end to the claim, of whatever sum was due by the debtor to the creditor.

Now, with respect to the above, this absurd doctrine, of taking two payments for one debt, depends altogether upon a mere quibble of sophistical jargon: for if such were not, in every respect, as ignorant thereof as the brutes that perish, they would certainly have known, that where debt is paid, no forgiveness can possibly take place: or if the debt is forgiven, no other payment but gratitude, is due to said creditor, after the debt is forgiven: for either of which, as has been observed, puts a final end to the claim of the creditor, for said debt.

And from this, I shall, therefore, next endeavour to show the inconsistency of that doctrine, of Christ's death being a positive price, paid to satisfy the demands of justice, for the sins of mankind.

In the first place, it thereby makes God contradict himself, where he saith, "That he keepeth mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that he will by no means clear the guilty." Now, wherever a price is paid, there can be no forgiveness; because payment, as in the above, puts an end to the claim or charge, made upon the debtor. And not only this; but the taking a price for sin (before committed), is not only an indulgence, but an encouragement to sin; and before it be repented of, is to clear and set free the guilty, when wallowing in the midst

of their iniquity. And as the debtor can be no longer detained, after the debt is paid, it must therefore be a downright contradiction, to what God himself hath exprest.

In the second place, of justice being satisfied by the death of the guiltless, in taking away the life of the innocent, in place of the guilty, as a punishment for sin, in order that the guilty may be set free, is not only wild, but absurd to the highest degree: and would, therefore, be a piece of the highest injustice, that could possibly take place, by reason of the complex nature thereof, or ingredients of which it consists. First, in being satisfied with the blood of the innocent, in place of punishing the guilty. Second, by absolving from the guilt of iniquity, without repentance being required of the transgressor. Third, if it should be objected, that justice doth forgive and absolve the sinner, from the guilt of sin, upon account of the price paid, this would be an accepting of the sinner, guilty and polluted as he is. And if it shall be said, that justice does not forgive nor absolve the sinner, from the guilt of sin, upon account of the price paid, without an unfeigned repentance, this would be still worse; because it would be no less than an accepting of two payments for one debt, which would be a transmutation of justice, into a piece of the most enormous injustice, that ever the human mind could possibly conceive: for that of an unfeigned repentance, is all, and the only satisfaction, required by God, in his absolving from the guilt of sin. Now,

as this being not only required, but sustained by God, as the most just and useful punishment required by justice, as due thereto from the sinner, ought therefore, above all others, to be esteemed as the will of God.

Hence, nor is this all—No: for God never punisheth, but with the utmost reluctance; for when justice or judgment, come to be executed to the full, upon the obstinate and incorrigible offender, he then calls it his strange work: for God never afflicts nor grieves the sons or children of men willingly. No: for he would rather that the wicked would forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto the Lord and live; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that no satisfaction can possibly be made to justice for an offence; but only by the offender himself: and the satisfaction required, can never possibly be attained, but only through an unfeigned repentance for the offence committed: for justice can never possibly be satisfied, while the offence remains unrepented of. No. And if justice cannot be satisfied, without an unfeigned repentance, a substitute, because innocent, can never possibly repent of guilt; therefore, would be nothing more than a mock satisfaction, or an attempting to satisfy justice, with injustice: or in other words, would be an offering up of justice, as a propitiatory sacrifice, to satisfy injustice. For justice can never possibly be sa-

tisfied with any thing else, or less than the punishment of the offence, *viz.* an unfeigned repentance; for while the offence itself rests unpunished, justice still remains unsatisfied.

JUD. Is justice more satisfied by repentance, than by punishment?

GEN. Yes. And for proof thereof, repentance merits favour with God; but punishment is continued without intermission.

JUD. In regard to this subject, one thing ought to be considered, which is, as has been observed, Is justice infinite?

GEN. Yes.

JUD. If justice be infinite, then, every offence, because inconsistent with justice, must therefore be infinite also: and if infinite, can never possibly be satisfied for, with less than an infinite satisfaction; therefore, as the offender being only a finite agent, he can never possibly make an infinite satisfaction, for the offence committed.

GEN. That every offence is infinite, or that a finite being could be guilty of an infinite offence, this I have already shown to be absurd. But according to your hypothesis, justice can never possibly be satisfied by the death of the offender, as being only a finite agent, but by the death of an infinite, which is impossible; because an infinite, can never possibly die. And if an infinite cannot therefore die, there can no satisfaction (according to you, Judaizer) be made for man.

JUD. Yes; Jesus Christ died as a sacrifice to satisfy justice for man's offence.

GEN. Was Jesus Christ infinite?

JUD. Yes.

GEN. If Jesus Christ was infinite, he could never possibly die; and if he could not die, he could never therefore, according to your hypothesis, make satisfaction to justice for our offences.

JUD. But he was both God and man.

GEN. If Jesus Christ was both God and man, as man, he could die; but as God, he could not die; therefore, as man, he was finite and died. And if infinite, as God, he, therefore, could neither suffer nor die.

And besides all this, what horrid ignorance and bombast is it, to imagine that a temporal death could either procure, or purchase a spiritual life.

Hence, and from this, it is evident, that though Jesus Christ, as man, suffered and died, that which suffered and died, being of a finite nature, could never possibly make an infinite, but only a finite satisfaction.

JUD. But as Christ being both God and man, his death is said to have made an infinite satisfaction, for the sins of the whole human race.

GEN. Yes; that, though false, as appears evident from the above, is the received opinion, imposed upon the world by Judaizing teachers: for I have been oft-times an ear-witness, in hearing that doctrine taught, declaring expressly, that one drop of Christ's blood, was more than sufficient to have satis-

fied infinite justice, and to have paid the debt of ten thousand worlds.

Now, as they tell us that justice could never possibly be satisfied, with less than a full and complete satisfaction, or with less than what paid the debt, in what light is this in which they represent justice, as not to be satisfied with less than what paid the debt, and yet to accept of ten thousand times more than what was due? And not only this; but whatever number of drops were contained in the mass of Christ's blood, additional to the first, were just all that as many times ten thousand additional sums, above what was due in the payment of said debt; or of what justice could possibly require.

As to the nature of that justice, that could not be satisfied with less than her due; and yet to accept of, and receive not only thousands, but millions of times more than what she could justly require as due, I do not understand. But though such may imagine, that, by their magnifying justice, as in the above, they do thereby honour God; when yet, after all, there is no being under heaven, can possibly speak more unbecoming or dishonourably of him, who is the God of the universe, than what is implied in your hypothesis.

Others again (but with more plausibility) to avoid this extreme, of one drop of Christ's blood having been sufficient, as in the above (taking one whole for another), hold of it being shed for the whole human race, without

exception. But to this, it is objected, that if a great part of mankind were decreed, or what they call predestinated to damnation; and that only a few thereof are, or have it in their power to be saved, according to the doctrine of the electarians, the greatest part of Christ's blood, must, therefore, have been shed in vain. And, that he only died for a certain number, as exprest by these electarian gentlemen, and not for the whole: this makes the doctrine, of one drop of said blood being sufficient, no better, but infinitely worse, than in the above. And not only this, but on whatever hinge the doctrine turns, of Christ's blood being shed, or having died as a propitiatory sacrifice, to satisfy strict and positive justice for sin, it thoroughly confounds, and thereby destroys itself, to the utter and inexpressible confusion of its different votaries.

But, further, with respect to what has been observed in the above, concerning that of an infinite offence and satisfaction, if there was nothing more than the human nature suffered, then there was no more, for certain, than only a human sacrifice slain, and a finite satisfaction made; and if only human, could never, therefore, satisfy for sin, or atone (though wrongly exprest) for what they call an infinite offence. And if it should be said, that the divine nature suffered, on purpose to make an infinite satisfaction, for what they call the infinite evil of sin, this is not possible: for an infinite can never possibly suffer by a finite; for if this were the case, the finite behaved first either

✓ to be advanced to an infinite, or the infinite reduced to a finite: for an infinite is always, for certain, above the power of a finite. And if it were possible that an infinite could suffer by a finite, it remained no more an infinite, but a finite; and, therefore, if only finite, unable to satisfy for sin, according to your hypothesis.

Further, and besides all this, a temporal death is nothing more than only a temporal satisfaction; therefore, can never possibly satisfy for a spiritual. For if such a thing as death, or shedding of blood, could satisfy for sin, the death, or blood of the murderer, would be a full and complete satisfaction, or price paid for the life of the murdered: this is what fairly delineates, and proves the absurdity of such a doctrine: for as the nature of sin being of a spiritual quality, the punishment thereof, must therefore be spiritual also: for nothing else can satisfy justice, but a spiritual conviction, and an unfeigned repentance, to merit pardon or forgiveness from God, who is a Spirit, for the offence committed; neither can one spirit be punished for the offence of another—No: for though it should voluntarily take upon it, to suffer the punishment that is due to another, it can never possibly satisfy justice, for the offence committed: for no punishment can justly fall upon the head of any, but the being that contracted it; neither can justice be satisfied by any, but only by an unfeigned repentance, or punishment of the contractor. But this, as observed, he calls his strange work:

for a being can never repent of a crime, of which it is not guilty: and, if it cannot repent of the crime, it can never, therefore, satisfy justice, for the offence committed: and though the innocent should willingly suffer for the guilty, it is only suffering for suffering's sake; but can never possibly either repent of the guilt, or be a punishment for a crime of which it was not guilty.

From hence, it follows, that if punishment of sin, consisted of corporeal or in bodily chastisement; when the criminal has fulfilled the law, in suffering death, justice having no more to require, would therefore be satisfied for the offence committed: and, if satisfied, he could never possibly, according to justice, be punished in a future state, for the offence for which he had already suffered. But, though this were the case, as in the above, could justice, as observed elsewhere, be satisfied with the life of the innocent, in place of the guilty? No: and though justice could be satisfied with the life of the innocent, in place of the guilty, the punishment of the body, or death of the criminal, which is only temporal, could never satisfy for the sin of the soul, which is spiritual.

Now, therefore, since temporal punishment cannot possibly satisfy for a spiritual offence, the death of Christ, which was only temporal, could never possibly make a spiritual satisfaction, or satisfy for the sins of men.

From this it is, therefore, evident, that the blood of the whole human race (Christ him-

self not excepted), though shed or poured out as a sacrifice for sin, the whole thereof being only corporeal, could not possibly satisfy for so much as one offence: for nothing in the creation of God, but an unfeigned repentance, can satisfy for sin. And as Christ, therefore, having no sin, he could never possibly repent of that, of which he was not guilty; neither could his blood, which was no more than a corporeal substance, be a sacrifice to make satisfaction for sin, which is spiritual.

Now, from hence it follows, that a temporal death, is what could never possibly have purchased more than a temporal life: but of this, we are certain, it did not; because temporal death has prevailed, in every respect, as much over the human race, since Christ suffered, as before.

Further, it is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that as sin being only an act of the mind, communicated therefrom to the body, no corporeal substance can therefore satisfy justice, on account thereof. No; nothing else than a contrary act of the same spirit, *viz.* that of contrition, or an unfeigned repentance, can ever possibly, either satisfy, or atone for it—No: for if temporal death, could satisfy justice for sin, repentance would, therefore, be altogether vain and of no effect, either as to relax the sentence, or prevent the punishment from being executed upon the offender, for the offence committed.

Lastly, In reference to what has been expressed on this subject, if the blood of Christ was shed,

as a price paid to satisfy offended justice, for the sins of the whole human race, if only a part thereof was saved, most of his blood behoved, therefore, to have been shed in vain: or if the whole mass poured out, was no more than sufficient to satisfy, for what they call the elect, according to the doctrine of the electarians, this makes the case nothing better, but much worse; because a great part of said race, behoved to perish inevitably, by reason of there being no more blood, in said mass, than sufficient (according to the above doctrine) to satisfy for the electarians alone.

JUD. But, as observed in the foregoing, though the divine nature could not possibly suffer, the human nature, being closely united to the divine, therefore, made an infinite satisfaction for sin.

GEN. Where was the divine nature, when Christ was suffering upon the cross, when he thus cried out, saying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? For it is more than evident, from what is there expressed by Christ himself, that he was neither God, nor was infinite power in or with him, in time of his death: for, if God, he certainly could have supported himself.

JUD. The divine had then, no doubt, made its exit from the human.

GEN. If closely united to the human, as expressed by you, Judaizer, it could not possibly fly therefrom, without taking the human nature along with it; and (though capable of suffering, as in reality it could not) if

fled, according to your expression, the human nature suffering, independent thereof, could not possibly make any thing more, than only a mere finite satisfaction; therefore, could by no means, either atone, or satisfy for sin, according to your hypothesis.

But, to return, and in order that the above doctrine (of one drop of Christ's blood being sufficient to satisfy for ten thousand worlds), and others of like nature, may be received as divine, they who patronize the foresaid, tell the people, that whatever doctrines God (according to them) hath either given to, or required of them to believe, are not to be called in question, but must be received as divine. Thus, answerable to what is here exprest, all they who plead in behalf, either of the above, or of whatever doctrines as are inconsistent with the nature, attributes, and perfections of God, the salvo to which they fly, and use in support thereof, is God's sovereignty: pleading, that as he himself hath a right, and as none can call him in question, or say unto him, What dost thou? he may, therefore, either require, or do in every thing thereof what he will. But in answer to this objection, there is no one doctrine under heaven, whether Roman Catholic, Mahometanism, or be what it will, can possibly be so gross and inconsistent with the nature of God, but what this objection or salvo, used by these consecrated gentlemen, will be a cover thereto: and not only a cover, but an undeniable proof in its behalf; and not only a proof, but would make all, and e-

very one thereof, of equal authority with another; and would likewise put an end to every test under heaven, in proof of a religion or doctrine being divine, more than another.

For each thereof, according to the above, the Pagan not excepted, can, upon the same basis, plead his sovereignty, in favours of what they profess, in every respect, as much as another: for there is not one religion or doctrine under heaven, can possibly be so gross or inconsistent with the nature of God, but what the above claim of God's sovereignty, will be an infallible test of its authority being divine, when applied thereto.

JUD. As to the Pagan, *viz.* idolatry, that can never be; for he saith, "I will not give my glory to another, neither my praise to graven images."

GEN. If his sovereignty cover, and take away one contradiction, there is no contradiction accepted, but must pass and go with another. But to proceed,

To such, therefore, we may very justly apply that which was exprest by Jesus Christ to Peter, concerning his death; where he, *viz.* Peter, like the rest of the apostles, who trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel, expecting Christ to have been a temporal Monarch, who was to live, remain, and reign for ever; and to have given unto them thrones, and dominions, as they themselves looked, wished, and longed for, to sit upon. But upon this, he, *viz.* Peter, despair-

ing of his hope, began to rebuke him, saying, "Be it far from thee Lord; this shall not be unto thee," (of whose government there shall be no end); but he turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," *viz.* those whose ambition is to inherit a temporal kingdom, in place of that which is spiritual.

JUD. Your arguments being so conclusive and irresistible, I am, therefore, now willing to submit. But then, What comes of Christ being made a sacrifice to satisfy strict and positive justice? Must these all go for naught?

GEN. Both Jews and Gentiles having formed such ideas of Almighty God, such as, that justice could not be satisfied with less than a full and complete satisfaction, *viz.* the death of the offender, or some other being in his room and stead, God, therefore, to convince the world of such a mistake, sent Jesus Christ, invested with authority to proclaim the glad tidings or news of the everlasting gospel, *viz.* the pardon of sin upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, that by living agreeable to the duties therein contained, he thereby assured them, that they should be accepted of him. The doctrine formerly taught and received, gave no encouragement for repentance, as there being no forgiveness annexed thereto, but only as in the above; so that, as people being once guilty, they having no hope to obtain mercy, too often continued therein,

till once God was pleased to grant such a glorious recovery, as being fully certified and assured to us in the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ for our deliverance. But the pardon of sin, according to the gospel scheme, independent of sacrifices and other ceremonies, contained in that law, was what the Jews could by no means dispense with, as to have come from God; but were deeply prejudiced against receiving it; because built on the ruins and expulsion of the above, *viz.* Judaism. The chief, or capital stress of the Mosaic or Jewish system, had its origin from the self-same particular, from which Paganism derived its birth. The sum of which particular, being positively this, that justice could not possibly be satisfied, with less than a full or complete retaliation or satisfaction, *viz.* the death of the criminal, for the offence committed. And in order to console and pacify their minds, they unburdened themselves thereof, by transferring over the guilt and punishment due, upon the head of some innocent animal, that it might thereby suffer and die in their room and stead, for the offence that they themselves had committed. In so doing, they believed, that they did not only alleviate, but purchased an ample discharge of the debt or offence which they had before committed.

Hence, however strange and absurd this may appear to some, it is upon this very basis or first principle, that both the Pagan and Jewish religions were built; for in so doing they imagined, that justice was not only there-

by satisfied, but the wrath of the invisible powers were likewise pacified towards them. The above was an established principle with both Jews and Gentiles, till once it pleased Almighty God to reveal his will by Jesus Christ, to deliver them from such vanities, assuring them, that it was only by an unfeigned repentance, and turning unto God through the forsaking of sin, in living in obedience to his will, that they could possibly be absolved from the guilt, and received into favour with him. And this is the only basis, and principal data, upon which the gospel is built, the pardon and forgiveness of sin, by a sincere and unfeigned repentance, and turning unto God, in living in obedience to his will, as taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

Punishment being, therefore, the effect of sin, when once the sinner is convicted thereof, repents and turns therefrom unto God, by living in obedience to his will; the cause thereof being removed, the effect ceases in course: for as by the removing of fuel, the fire ceaseth and dieth away; so doth repentance and new obedience, remove and put an end to punishment, which is the effect of sin. For as fire cannot burn without, or independent of fuel; neither can punishment, the effect of sin, exist, when the cause thereof is removed and taken away: for as fire that is buried in or under the ashes, remaineth fresh for the devouring of fuel; so doth punishment wait for to brood on the soul of such as die in sin unrepented of.

Hence, before I conclude this dialogue, I shall therefore lay before the reader, the sentiments of a certain great Author, upon this subject, which are as follows.

“ Having said this much concerning the nature of man, I shall proceed to explain, as far as necessary to the present purpose, the nature and attributes of God: for as nothing can become our duty, which is contrary to the nature of man to perform; so neither can any thing become our duty, which is contrary to the nature of these moral attributes of God to require.

Now, the moral attributes of God, which are chiefly to be considered upon this subject, are those of justice and goodness, upon which, I shall observe as follows.

I. The justice or righteousness of God, may be considered either positively or negatively. The positive justice of God, consists in giving to his creatures as much good as they have any claim of right to expect; and if they have no claim of right, his positive justice is entirely out of the question. The negative justice of God, consists in not extending the punishment of his creatures beyond their guilt; that is, beyond what they have deserved.

There is, says Dr. Whichcote, a just, which of right may be done, and there is a just, which of right must be done: (or as Mr. Emlyn expresses it, *Quod fieri potest*, and *quod fieri debet*.) The rule or law of righteousness, requires that to be done, which justly may be

done: or in other words, justice consists in giving every one what is due to him; but not in exacting all that is due from him: every being having a power and right to give freely what is his own, or to forgive what is his due, without injustice; otherwise justice would be inconsistent with mercy and bounty, and we do not find any attribute of God in scripture, which necessitates him to punish, wherever the ends of his government can be better served by mercy, bounty, and forgiveness.

II. The goodness of God, considered as distinct from his justice, consists, either in conferring unmerited happiness (that is, where there is no prior proportionable merit in the person, on whom it is conferred); or in lessening or forgiving the punishment, which might justly be inflicted.

But here again, it must be observed, that, as justice does not require every punishment to be inflicted, which may be inflicted consistent with justice, but the ends of divine government are always considered: so, neither does goodness require every blessing to be conferred upon the individuals, which may be consistent with goodness. But even the goodness or bounty of God, is carried on for the good of the whole, and must be restrained by the ends of government, to promote the virtue and happiness of the whole; with which many evils among the individuals, may not only be consistent, but very necessary to promote them.

As to the moral attribute of justice, Mr.

Theophilus Gale has given us this strange account of it. "Man, says he, wills things, because they are just; but things are therefore just with God, because he wills them." But is it possible that the same action, and under the same circumstances, should be just, when performed by one being, and unjust when performed by another: may it not as safely be said, that a proposition may be true, when asserted by one being, and false when asserted by another: The christian religion does not oblige us to speak wickedly for God, nor to talk deceitfully for him; but is equally an enemy to superstition as our own: nor does it suffer us therefore to exalt his absolute will and power, at the expense of his moral character, as if it depended wholly on his will, that virtue is preferable to vice, and not upon its own intrinsic nature. But it teaches what is true in fact, that rectitude is unchangeable, independent and eternal, and no more the subject of power or will, than necessary existence.

Hence, men may flatter tyrants, by telling them that they can change the nature of things, and make right to be wrong, and wrong to be right and at their command; but while they think to exalt them by such speeches, they, in reality, deprive them of every moral excellence, and debase them below the common state of men. For if right and wrong depend on mere will and power, there can be no such thing as goodness, or justice, or moral excellence of any kind, even in God himself; because if he had acted the very reverse

to what he always has done (which may very justly be supposed, if it had been in its own nature equally right), his actions, according to this notion, would have been equally just, and good, and praise-worthy, as they now are. But christianity does not, by a false compliment to absolute power, confess what is not true, that God would be equally the object of our adoration, as he now is (merely upon account of his absolute dominion) if he were cruel, unjust and false; but with a rational and manly worship, adores and praises him, because he chooses to be merciful and true. But he could not be merciful, nor just, nor true, in annexing damnation to the vicious actions of his creatures, if virtue and vice, depended on mere arbitrary will; and the vice which he condemns, was in its nature equally meritorious, with the virtue which he rewards. On the contrary, it would be the greatest cruelty to form laws of right and wrong, by which a great number of his creatures would fall short of happiness, when, if things were left to themselves, to continue as they were, no one could be condemned at all. If before a law, actions were all indifferent, how cruel must it be to make such a law as would condemn a great part of the creation, by calling or declaring one thing to be good and another to be evil, one just and another unjust, when, in truth and nature, there was no difference; but one thing was as good, and as just as another? As such an arbitrary determination, would be contrary to the mercy and justice of

God; so would it be also to his wisdom and knowledge. To consider one thing to be good, and another to be evil, when he knew them to be indifferent in themselves, and in their consequences, would be contrary to God's knowledge; and to declare them to be so, would be contrary to truth; and to prefer the one to the other, in so extraordinary a manner, if there was no difference in their natures upon which to be found, such preference would be contrary to wisdom: for arbitrary will, as it makes no difference or alteration in the things themselves, can be no ground or reason of preference, to an intelligent being.

But in truth, God does not make one thing right and another wrong, one thing morally good and another thing morally evil; but only reveals to us their several natures: and he does not do this in order to manifest his power, but his love. He deters us from vice, because, in its very nature, it is destructive to rational and natural happiness; and he allures us to righteousness, because it preserves every thing in its proper state, every being in its proper rights; and promotes regularity, and order, and harmony, between the separate interests, of the several individuals through the universe; and thereby, the true interest and happiness of the whole."

BENJAMIN BEN MORDECAI.

From hence, I shall, therefore, conclude this subject with the following remark. For men to argue, that because God is sovereign,

and not accountable to any for his actions, he is therefore not to be regulated in his procedure towards his rational creatures, by these different attributes, wherein he daily manifesteth himself in the government of the world; but only by that of his absolute power, independent of his other perfections. The effect of such reasoning, would be no less than to reduce the Almighty into a mere tyrant, or what is next to a devil, in place of his being God: for absolute power, independent of justice, goodness, and truth, is, therefore, by no means divine: for it is only by reason of his being possessor, not only of absolute power, but also of justice, of goodness, and all his other attributes, that he is God; for a being that acts independent of the above, is therefore no God at all.

JUD. I, being therefore no longer able to withstand your arguments, and being now convinced from the justness of what you advance, do therefore yield up this subject, and submit to your determination.

DIALOGUE II.

On Repentance and Turning unto God.

GEN. **I**F convinced of what has been expressed in the above Dialogue, you will, therefore, now admit of repentance being not only the first, but principal condition of the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ, independ-

ent of Judaism or ceremonial law. But one thing necessary to be considered, in respect to this subject, is the difference betwixt the gospel and Judaism: the conditions of said ritual, being altogether of a temporal nature, consisted only in paying of cattle to the priests; but those of the gospel are spiritual, and of a quite different nature, which is, "Repent and turn unto God, and your iniquities shall be blotted out." The one, therefore, only a mere external service, but the other an internal: the one from God, but the other was the appointment of men, *viz.* priests, by whom the world is stolen out of both their souls and silver.

JUD. But in conjunction with our last, will God, upon our repentance, pardon our iniquities?

GEN. Upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him (answerable to Jesus Christ), he will.

JUD. I am sure we are taught otherwise by our priests.

GEN. Yes; but an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, in living in obedience to his will, independent of sacrifice and every ceremony, is the sum and substance of our religion or gospel, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

Before we enter upon this subject of repentance and turning unto God that we may have life, there is one thing to be remarked, which deserves our particular notice, and is as follows.

Whoever therefore, would take upon them to

change and establish a different system, either of laws or of religion; or yet to abolish or make void a law or a religion, or whatever has been anciently in force, and would replace or establish new ones in their stead, it is therefore necessary, that they first give full proof of their authority for what they do, in order that others may have confidence therein, before they either receive or trust thereto. For proof of which, see Luke xx. 1, 2. "And it came
" to pass, that, as he taught the people in
" the temple, and preached the gospel, the
" chief priests and the scribes came upon
" him, with the elders, and spake unto him,
" saying, Tell us, by what authority doest
" thou these things? or, who is he that gave
" thee this authority?"

The above challenge, was upon the account of his taking upon him, in the former chapter to purge the temple of the obnoxious villany of these consecrated gentlemen, the priests, who had converted that holy place into a public market, in order that they might thereby increase their gain, by the different customs which accrued from the merchandise of those whom they encouraged to resort thither, for their own personal advantage.

Further, it therefore appears evident, from the text, that these consecrated gentlemen, in order that they might have it in their power to extort an extravagant custom off whatever commodities were sold, had prohibited the buying of sacrifices at any other market than the temple; which enabled these unconscion-

able dealers (who are called thieves in the text), to charge exorbitant prices from the people, for whatever goods or articles they were obliged to purchase, by the order of the above gentlemen, the priests, who appear to have partaken of the unlawful gain of these thieves or robbers, who waited on purpose to cosen the people out of their money. But, to return to our subject,

The above is what all different lawgivers have been particularly careful and aware of. Christ, no doubt, being fully sensible of the necessity thereof, gave full and ample proof of the authority of his mission, that he, and the whole of what he taught and was set forth by him, were from God. And having testified the same by the power of miracles, in doing good to the people, he thereby had a just right to require their belief of his mission being divine: for he saith, that, "Except I
" had done among you, the things which none
" other man did, ye had not had sin; but
" now ye have no cloak for your sin." For as the sanction of every law or religion, depends upon the authority of its lawgiver or founder; so also, does the faith of such who believe therein, and comply in living in obedience conformably thereto. Answerable to what is here exprest, were the offers of the gospel, made to every people, *viz.* both Jews and Gentiles? They behoved first to believe in the authority of its author, before they could give credit to the laws delivered by him. This is what Christ himself required of the people;

first to believe his authority; and upon this he founds the doctrines of the gospel, *viz.* the pardon of sin, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, by living in obedience, conformable to the laws and commandments contained therein.—And also, the apostles, conformable thereto, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (which includes the doctrines he taught), and thou, or ye, shall be saved. The first thing required, was to believe in his authority, and then they could, with confidence, thereby give credit to the laws and commandments promulgated by him, for their present and everlasting good.

From hence it follows, since it was necessary that the authority of the lawgiver should be ascertained, in order to give sanction to these laws, for the sake of their validity, a belief in the lawgiver, must therefore be altogether unprofitable, without a proper respect be paid to the said laws, given and delivered by him: for it is only by our paying a proper respect to these laws and commandments, that we can gain the approbation, or be respected by the lawgiver: for except we believe in the authority of the founder, we can have no just confidence of being accepted, by living in obedience to his laws.

Now, since this is the case, as in the above, it is therefore necessary, that we first be assured of the authority of the lawgiver, before we have confidence of being accepted, by living in obedience to his laws. For it is only our having assurance in his authority, that gives

us confidence of being accepted, by our living in obedience thereto.

Further, and to proceed on this subject, thus John the baptist, Christ's fore-runner, begins in his paving the way in opening up the gospel, ushering it in as a mighty herald, saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

JUD. If repentance and turning unto God, are the conditions required of us in the gospel, that we may be accepted of him, you will quote your authority, that others may also be certified in the knowledge thereof.

GEN. Answerable to your request, it shall, therefore, be according to your desire; for which, see as follows, Matth. ix. 13. "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Mark i. 4. "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Chap. vi. 12. "And they went out, and preached, that men should repent." Luke xxiv. 47. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Acts ii. 38. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Chap. iii. 19. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Chap. xiii. 24. "When John had first preached before his coming (*viz.* Christ's),

“ the baptism of repentance to all the people
“ of Israel.” Ver. 38. “ Be it known unto
“ you, therefore, men and brethren, that
“ through this man (*viz.* his doctrines) is
“ preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.”
Chap. xvii. 30. “ And the times of this igno-
“ rance, God winked at; but now com-
“ mandeth all men every where to repent.”
Chap. xix. 4. “ Then said Paul, John verily
“ baptized with the baptism of repentance,
“ saying unto the people, That they should
“ believe on him, which should come after
“ him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” Chap. xx. 21.
“ Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the
“ Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith
“ towards our Lord Jesus Christ.” Chap.
xxvi. 20. “ But shewed first unto them of
“ Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and through-
“ out all the coasts of Judea, and then to the
“ Gentiles, that they should repent and turn
“ to God, and do works meet for repentance.”
Heb. vi. 1. “ Therefore, leaving the principles
“ of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto
“ perfection; not laying again the foundation
“ of repentance from dead works, and of faith
“ towards God.” 2 Pet. iii. 9. “ The Lord
“ is not slack concerning his promise, as some
“ men count slackness; but is long-suffering
“ to us-ward, not willing that any should pe-
“ rish, but that all should come to repent-
“ ance.”

It is, therefore, now evident, from the a-
bove texts, that an unfeigned repentance and
turning unto God, that we may be saved and

have life, is not only the doctrine, but even the very gospel itself, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles. But there are two different species of repentance, one of which is internal, and the other thereof external, as observed in the above: the cause thereof, proceeds only from a fear of punishment, and not from a love to truth; and is not only incident to rational beings alone, but extends to some of the brutal tribes. The other, *viz.* the internal, proceedeth not so much from fear, as from a dislike or hatred to every species of evil, and an internal regard to that which is good, or respects the nature of God.

Further, and for proof that God requires no higher terms, than an unfeigned repentance, in his pardoning of sinners, it is obvious from that infallible precept, laid down by Jesus Christ himself, in order to direct us when we come to address or make our requests to God; it being a part of that, which in Matth. vi. is called the Lord's prayer, verses 12, 14, 15.

“ And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our
“ debtors. For if ye forgive men their tref-
“ passes, your heavenly Father will also for-
“ give you. But if ye forgive not men their
“ trespasses, neither will your Father forgive
“ your trespasses.” These, with different o-
ther texts to which they refer, are an indis-
putable evidence, that God requires no higher
terms, in his forgiving the sinner, than only
an unfeigned repentance and forsaking of sin.
And to represent God in any other light, in

his forgiving of sinners; than in these express terms, wherein Christ hath declared his will, is no less than to reject and subvert the whole counsel of God, whereby he maketh his will known to men for their salvation, in his acceptance of them.

Hence, it is therefore now evident, from the above, that the pardon of sin, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, is no vain hypothesis of mine. No; but is that which was expressly taught by Christ himself, the same as by his apostles, for the salvation of men. And as for such who hold repentance below their notice, and would go to heaven independent of that duty, expecting that they shall be accepted of, and have salvation by virtue of believing in Christ (relying on his righteousness), exclusive of what God hath commanded, as of no value in his sight, with such, I have nothing to do.

JUD. But we are said to be saved by the righteousness of Christ,

GEN. Yes, we are: and that righteousness of Christ, by which we are saved, is the different duties he has there taught and set before us in the gospel; of which duties, if we come short of what God has there commanded, we are required to repent, and he will forgive us freely.

The above is no more, than what appears evident, from Acts v. 31. "Him hath God
"exalted with his right hand to be a Prince
"and a Saviour, for to give repentance to
"Israel, and forgiveness of sins." To declare

the will of God to that people, who were shut up in darkness by their priests, who refused that God would pardon sin to any, but in and through the conditions of the ceremonial law. —“ To give repentance to Israel.” —To certify to that people, that by an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, their iniquities should be blotted out, independent of the ceremonial law or rites contained therein, under which they had been so long kept in darkness, through the cunning and artifice of their priests, by whom they were stolen out of both their souls and silver.

JUD. But we have no power to repent; for repentance is the gift of God.

GEN. In answer to your objection, the whole of our being is the gift of God; and repentance being a part of that gift, is therefore inseparable from the constitution of man, during their probationary state.

For illustration, if men, in virtue of these powers they at first received from God, cannot repent, by what means does he require and invite them to repent? And also he saith, That he waiteth long, in order that they may repent and be delivered. And further, if man's repentance be additional to what they have already received from God, how is it said that he waiteth upon them? This would not be a waiting upon men, in order that they may repent, but only upon himself for their repentance, which would be no less than a mere contradiction of terms: for if men cannot repent, they, for certain, can never possi-

bly be culpable, nor condemned for not repenting. This, no doubt, is a doctrine (though very much in vogue), calculated to the dishonour of God, in making him appear in such a light, as only speaking nonsense in place of truth.

From hence it follows, if men had no power to repent and turn unto God, why then does Jesus Christ accuse and condemn Chora-
zin and Bethsaida (for not repenting), saying, Matth. xi. 21. "Wo unto thee, Chora-
zin! Wo unto thee Bethsaida! for if the
"mighty works which were done in you
"had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they
"would have repented long ago in sackcloth
"and ashes?" And also, if men had not a power to repent and turn unto God, why does Christ accuse Jerusalem, saying, Chap. xxiii. 37. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that kil-
"lest the prophets, and stonest them which
"are sent unto thee, how often would I have
"gathered thy children together, even as a
"hen gathereth her brood under her wings,
"and ye would not?"

Jerusalem, when invited by Christ, being condemned for not coming, is an infallible proof of their being possessed of a power to come; for if they had not been possessed of a power to come, they, for certain, never could have been accused by Christ (agreeable to justice), for not coming. No, they never possibly could,

Further, and to proceed, see also the prodigal son, who it is said, that in his having

bethought himself, was, upon his conviction, returning home, and within sight of his father's house, before his father saw him.

Hence, it is therefore now evident, from the above, that repentance is natural to the constitution of every human soul, till once it becomes callous and inflexible, through a long habit or continuation in vice. It is further evident, that there could be no repentance, except it proceeded from a desire of being forgiven the offence committed. And if I have committed an offence against another, would I not wish that the person I had offended, would forgive me the offence committed against him? And if I wish that he should forgive me, this certainly lays me under an obligation, that if he offend me, I should also, upon his repentance, forgive him. Repentance and desire of being forgiven, is not only incident and an inherent principle in rational creatures alone, but is even likewise, as has been observed, natural to some of the animal tribes, with whom we ourselves are acquainted.

But further, of repentance being an inherent quality, for proof thereof, when either a person or people are convinced of the evil of sin, or wickedness wherein they have transgressed the law of their God, and turns therefrom unto him, it has in this case been said, that God repented, on account thereof, of the evil he intended against them: but as God is for ever unchangeably the same, repentance is a term which can never possibly be applied to him; because God can never possibly either

determine or do any thing, but what is both just and right.

From this it is evident, that the justice of God is thereby indispensibly bound to punish vice, and reward virtue: this, when properly exprest, is rendering to every one their due. Sin, therefore, being the cause of punishment, when once the cause thereof is removed, the effect must inevitably cease in course: what is here exprest, is all that is meant by repentance in God towards his creatures.

But to proceed, I know, indeed, some divines have insinuated, according to your assertion, that this important duty was not taught by the light of nature, but that it was peculiar to the gospel institution alone.

But, if the duties of repentance and amendment, were at any time made the terms of forgiveness, why not at all times? For this duty of repentance and desire of forgiveness, must have been originally implanted in the human heart by God himself, who never left his intelligent creatures without an evidence of his infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and truth; or without a knowledge of their duty to him, and to one another.

Hence, it is therefore to be remarked, that to repent of an injury done to our neighbour, and to beg his forgiveness, and also forgiveness of God, for the breach of his laws, were certainly taught by the light of nature; and also practised, till the priests corrupted and darkened the minds of the people, by representing God, as a being that was to be placat-

ed and rendered kind to his creatures, only, by sacrifices, fastings, penances, mortifications, and bodily pains.

But further, repentance and forgiveness, are what is binding upon all mankind: every eye must see, and every heart must, no doubt, feel the property of these duties, and their tendency to promote universal holiness. Hence, no person can possibly be happy, who is conscious of unrepented crimes.

It therefore appears evident, from the above, that repentance is a natural duty to the whole human race; and likewise that of forgiveness, as well as repentance. Mr. Locke, in his remark upon this subject, says, "God had, by the light of reason, revealed to all mankind who would make use of that light, that he was good and merciful. The same spark of divine nature and knowledge in man, which making him a man, showed him the law he was under as man, showed also the way of atoning the merciful, kind, compassionate author and father, of him and his being, when he had transgressed the law. He that made use of this candle of the Lord, so far as to find what was his duty, could not miss also the way to reconciliation and forgiveness, when he had failed of his duty.—The law is the eternal immutable standard of right; and a part of that law is, that a man should forgive not only his children, but his enemies, upon their repentance, asking pardon, and amendment; and therefore, he could not doubt that the

author of this law, and God of patience and consolation, who is rich in mercy, would forgive his frail offspring; if they acknowledged their faults, disapproved the iniquity of their transgressions, begged his pardon; and resolved, in earnest, for the future, to conform their actions to this rule, which they owned to be just and right. This way of reconciliation, this hope of atonement, the light of nature revealed to them."

From hence, it appears evident, that since God created man liable to fall, he therefore made him subject to repentance: for it was no more than perfectly just with God, in making man liable to fall, that he should annex repentance, as a necessary consequence thereto, for his relief: nor would it have been just with a perfect and upright being, to have created man liable to change, without having annexed repentance thereto, as in the above: for repentance is, in express words, not only a necessary, but natural consequence of fallibility; and therefore, inseparable from change.

But again, it may be observed, that it appears no more than what is just and due with Almighty God, to grant repentance to rational creatures, who are not only connected with a corporeal substance, but are also subjected to dwell as probationers, with animal powers, warring against the rational.

JUD. But man could never possibly have repented, had it not been brought about by the supreme agency of a supernatural power.

GEN. In answer to your objection, if these powers we received from God, in our first formation, be not sufficient, through the common supplies of his Holy Spirit, to bring about our repentance, how comes it to pass that we become more culpable before God, by not repenting and turning from our iniquities? If we have it not in our power to repent, we, for certain, can never be supposed culpable, or found guilty for not repenting: for no person can possibly be culpable, or found guilty, for not doing that which was not in his power to accomplish. For if it were not in man's power to repent, by virtue of these powers of which he is already possessed, God would by no means have required any such thing as repentance from him.

Hence, do we not see, how they have most sophistically blocked up the way to heaven, by making that impossible, which God himself hath required of us to perform: for if we had it not in our power to repent and do the will of God, independent of supernatural, or what they call irresistible grace or power, if supernatural, or what they call irresistible, we could by no means resist it. And if we could not repent, independent thereof, we are by no means condemnable for not repenting, when not visited therewith.

Hence, there is no place wherein God hath declared his will, for the good and salvation of men, that he refuseth; but promises pardon to every particular person, without exception, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning

unto him. But those who are advocates for Judaism, before they will admit that justice should be satisfied with an unfeigned repentance, as to grant forgiveness upon account thereof, without full restitution or death of the criminal, they will rather dispense, not only with his justice, but with all his different attributes and perfections together, rather than that one of their own favourite nostrums should be neglected, or fall into disrepute.

Further, Jesus Christ, to the utter confusion thereof, declares, That he came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And further, that upon an unfeigned repentance and turning from their iniquities unto God, he fully assured them of the pardon and forgiveness thereof. But this they have converted into believing that their sins shall be blotted out, in virtue of Christ's being slain as a sacrifice to satisfy justice, for the payment of a debt due to God, upon account of sin. But if such a thing were, as that a payment could either be made, or accepted of for the debt of sin, there is no forgiveness could possibly take place, where the debt is paid: for the word, payment, destroys the meaning of what they call pardon or forgiveness; for though a bill should pass (as observed elsewhere) through ten thousand hands, in way of payment, justice can never possibly be satisfied therewith, till paid by the person that contracted the debt; or forgiven by the creditor to whom it was due.

Furthermore, as observed in a former dia-

logue, that no action, whether good, bad, or indifferent, can possibly exist, but what hath its merit, either of reward, punishment, or indifference, annexed thereto, answerable to the degree of knowledge wherewith the being is posselt.

Now, since every action hath its merit, forgiveness must infallibly be the reward due to an unfeigned repentance for sin. And since forgiveness be the reward due to repentance, the remission thereof, must be entire: for the offence must either be remitted, or not remitted: for there is nothing can possibly exist, and not exist, at the same time together.

JUD. If we are saved by repentance and turning unto God, why are we not taught so by our instructors?

GEN. The reason why; because they teach you not a true, but a spurious gospel.

JUD. I am sure, as has been observed elsewhere on this subject, our iniquities are forgiven by virtue of the sufferings and death of Christ, who is said to have been punished on our account, and thereby to have satisfied justice for us.

GEN. That justice being satisfied, and we saved, according to the above, is what I have already proved to be absurd; therefore, deserves no farther answer.

JUD. I am sure we are taught otherwise, in the Mosaic institution.

GEN. We have been often told so; but let such, therefore, as adhere to Moses, in his law of retaliation, and are patrons for a vicarious

punishment, and satisfaction arising therefrom, learn from Lycurgus, that great Lacedemonian lawgiver, how offences, insults, and affronts, ought to be returned, or like you revenged. See Plutarch's life of Lycurgus. " This great man had made a law, which had
" almost put a total stop to the course of all
" vice, debauchery, and riot, in Sparta. The
" rich, who were exceeding angry with him,
" upon account thereof, pursued him one day
" with stones; and as he was flying into a
" temple, a youth, named Alcandor, who
" was of a very hasty and passionate temper,
" struck him in the face with a stick, and
" thereby drove out one of his eyes. This
" young fellow was apprehended, and brought
" to Lycurgus, in order that he might take
" what revenge upon him he thought fit." Now, ye disciples of Calvin, that would not that God should forgive the contrite and penitent sinner, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him, How do you think this Pagan revenged himself? " He only punished
" the aggressor, by keeping him in his house;
" and the kindness and good nature with
" which he treated him, had that effect, as
" turned the young man's heart, that, says
" Plutarch, he who was before violent and
" passionate, became very sober and moderate." Mean time, Lycurgus was the son of a king (he was the son of Eunomus, king of Sparta); and by consequence thereof, a good gentleman of honour: but yet, he did not think himself the worse gentleman, for pardoning

the affront; nor that satisfaction could not be made for it, without the death of the criminal.

Now, there is no such severity or barbarous satisfaction required here, by this ancient Pagan (as would have been expected by some of greater advantages), *viz.* that of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. No: It is the very essence of that divine law, sent from God, near nine hundred years before delivered by Jesus Christ, Matth. v. 43, 44, 45. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

Further (mark this), "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." In what is here expressed, is summed up the substance of the royal law, in which is included, that if we, through inadvertancy, transgress against our neighbour (meaning whatever person), would we not wish that he should forgive us our offence? And if our desire is that our neighbour should forgive us, we are therefore bound, by the same indispensable law, to forgive him his offences also.

Hence, to believe that God created man a fallible being, as he certainly did; and yet, after all, teach men to mistrust his forgiveness,

upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him: this, I apprehend, is no less than to mistrust the veracity and goodness of the great God, which, of all other sins, is certainly the greatest.

But further, as observed by Seneca, where he says, "Though in matters of courtesy, it is but honourable, to repay one favour with another; yet it is not lawful to return injury for injury: and it is as shameful, adds the Pagan, to be overcome with choler and resentment, as it is glorious to excel others in greatness of soul and generosity."

"What," says Epictetus, "because the person who has abused me, has already injured himself, must I needs add to his misery, by abusing him in my turn? No, surely not:" And the reason is; because, according to Seneca, the very term revenge is (not only) repugnant to human nature (but is also condemned by God himself: for it is an expression only known among barbarians, as being inseparable therefrom), and differs in the affront in nothing, but in order of time.

It is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that these ancient Pagans had no great notion of such as indulged a spirit, that would not pardon an offence, upon an unfeigned repentance. And they were far from thinking, that they became protectors of the insolent, because they forgave injuries. Is it not, therefore, now evident, from what is here expressed, that the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus, dwelt in some of these ancient Pagans; though

condemned by barbarous or mongrel christians, a great many centuries before ever he made his appearance in this our world. But such, as from whom this barbarous spirit has never as yet been eradicated, they will not only themselves refuse to forgive others; but also, refuse to admit of God's forgiving the contrite and penitent sinner his offence, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him; which is all the satisfaction that is required of us by God. And thus they would subject God, the God of the universe, to conform with the nature of their own barbarous, implacable, or savage disposition, contrary to what he himself has declared. For a disposition that will not forgive an injury, upon a sincere acknowledgment of the fault, without a full retaliation or restitution, is not only by far too low and mean to be ascribed to rational creatures, but is infinitely less still to be ascribed to God.

From hence it follows, that for us to represent God, who is not only the greatest, but is even the best of all other beings; and who requires of us, his creatures, to forgive one another our trespasses, upon no higher terms, than only the bare acknowledgment of the fault, by turning therefrom unto us; and yet he himself, who is our original Parent, will not forgive us, his children, our trespasses, upon no less terms, than an absolute restitution or complete satisfaction, *viz.* the death of the offender. This would not only be to re-

duce the Creator to a level, but even far below the creature itself.

Further, from hence, I would therefore advise all mankind, as far as my influence can possibly go, to be aware against feuds of whatever kind, either of themselves being the cause, or in taking part therewith to foment them. And, further, let none who either admit or embrace my sentiments, be guilty of the above. No: neither let them give place to resentment, such as to render evil for evil. No; but bear ye injuries with patience; and by this, you thereby overcome: and not only this, but let every one thereof, learn to overcome evil with good; that in so doing, they may become the children of their Father which is in heaven.

Thus, a due observance of the above, will be a mean, under God, in making both ourselves and others happy, if properly attended to: for it is only by acting, as in the above, and the like, that we can expect to be happy, and enjoy the favour of heaven.

JUD. But we do not claim of being altogether saved, by the death of Christ alone; but also, by virtue of having his righteousness imputed to us.

GEN. As for the doctrine of imputation, it being so grossly wild and subversive of justice, that a few lines may suffice to detect the fraud, and expose its vanity: for nothing can possibly be more unjust, than to impute the guilt of Adam's transgression to his posterity; and they made liable to punishment, upon account thereof: and not only this, but sin also par-

doned; and the sinner, while wallowing in the midst of his iniquity, absolved from the guilt and pollution thereof, through the righteousness of another; exclusive of either repentance or turning unto God.

To illustrate the above, if one person should kill another, will the putting on, or dressing the murderer in the raiment of the murdered, free and absolve him from the guilt of the murder committed? Or, will the putting on, or dressing up a thief in the raiment of an honest man, absolve him from the theft, as not being chargeable with the guilt thereof? Or, will the dressing a wicked person, in the clothes or raiment of the righteous, absolve him from his wickedness, as to become acceptable in the sight of God?

JUD. No, certainly not.

GEN. Neither will the imputing the righteousness of another, exclusive of an unfeigned repentance, and turning unto God, satisfy justice, nor absolve the sinner from the guilt of sin, as to become acceptable in the sight of God: for without repentance, there can be no remission or forgiveness; because the one necessarily depends upon the priority of the other: for pardon, or forgiveness, is only the consequence of an unfeigned repentance; and to impute righteousness where it is not, is not only repugnant to rectitude, virtue, and what not, but even to all the moral attributes of God. But to proceed,

There being nothing more evident than the above, as will appear from the following ob-

servation. Now, where is the king or sovereign, that would pass an act of indemnity, for to pardon rebels, persisting in their rebellion against the state? Would not the conditions thereof, rather require, that, upon the laying down of their arms and weapons of their rebellion, and by returning unto their duty, as faithful and loyal subjects, they should obtain pardon for their offences?

JUD. Most certainly.

GEN. Suitable thereto, is the whole gospel scheme, delivered to us by Jesus Christ and his apostles; assuring every particular sinner, that, upon their repentance and turning unto God, he will pardon their sin, and blot out their iniquity. But upon no other conditions, has God either offered salvation, or granted pardon to sinners. And whatever is contrary to the above terms, is altogether antichristian; therefore, destructive to sound morality, which is the basis of all true religion, as taught and inculcated upon us by Jesus Christ himself. And whoever rejects the above, may justly be supposed the declared enemies of both God and man.

Lastly, Before I wind up this subject, it is necessary to enquire into the foundation, upon which this imputed righteousness is built; and of what proof they advance for its authority. Is it in the New Testament? No: for the word, impute, bears no such meaning in that book, as may be understood from Rom. iv. 6, 8. where it is there referred, by the apostle, to the first and second verses of Psalm xxxii.

“ Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
“ whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man
“ unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity,
“ and in whose spirit there is no guile.” But
what is here exprest, in these two verses of this
Psalm, the writer thereof is only introducing
himself, in making way for what he there in-
tended to express afterwards; which may be
traced up to the 6th verse. But there is one
thing I would here ask, Was the forgiveness
spoke of in this Psalm, exclusive of repent-
ance? No; it was only the effect of an un-
feigned repentance and turning unto God,
through the forsaking of sin, as may be un-
derstood from the 5th verse; where he, who
is the writer thereof, saith, “ I acknowledged
“ my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have
“ I not hid. I said I will confess my trans-
“ gressions unto the Lord, and thou forgivest
“ the iniquity of my sin.”

Hence, there is nothing more expressive un-
der heaven, than, that the Psalmist's forgive-
ness, was the express effect of an unfeigned
repentance: for he saith, “ I acknowledged
“ my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have
“ I not hid.”

From hence it follows, there is nothing
more evident, than what this may be under-
stood from the above. That as by the remov-
ing of fuel from fire, the flame ceaseth and
goeth out; so doth an unfeigned repentance
for sin, and turning from iniquity unto God,
remove the punishment that is due thereto up-
on its account: for as fire cannot exist with-

out fewel; neither can punishment exist, independent of a sinful spirit. To this doth the second verse of this psalm agree; where it saith, "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Upon what account is iniquity, therefore, not imputed? Is it not (as observed in the latter clause of the verse), because in whose spirit there is no guile? As God is just, he, for certain, will never either impute sin, or inflict punishment upon the innocent, or on one whose heart is renewed, in whom there is no guile. Answerable to what is here exprest; as punishment being the effect of sin, when once sin, which is the cause thereof, comes to be destroyed (and dies away), by an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, punishment being only the effect, is thereby destroyed in course, and dies also. But to proceed,

The scripture phrase, of imputing righteousness, in the true sense of it, as given us by the apostle of the gentiles, means neither more nor less, than the forgiveness of sin: for he tells us, David describeth the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Where we see, that imputing righteousness, is equivalent to the forgiving iniquities, the covering of sin, and the not imputing of sin; in which sense the doctrine is very plain and intelligible, and the figure of

speech very natural: for as he who takes away an obstruction to our health, is said to give health; so he that takes away sin, which is an obstruction to our righteousness, is said to give or impute righteousness; and it is upon this account, that Christ is called the Lord our righteousness.

From hence, is it not evident, from the above, in what manner they have perverted the gospel of Christ, from the sense wherein it was taught and delivered by him, for the good and salvation of men? Which salvation, depended solely upon men's living conformable to said gospel: and upon our coming short of said life required by him, that we turn therefrom unto God, and our iniquities shall be blotted out: for it is only by putting on a life, imitable to Christ's life, that implies our being saved by his righteousness; and not as supposed by ignorant men.

Further, it is to be remarked, that as the Jews imagined, that, by fulfilling the works of the ceremonial law, they were entitled, and thereby made God a debtor; or in other words, laid him under an obligation to forgive them their sin, independent of either repenting or turning unto him. Paul being therefore sensible of the absurdity of such a doctrine, takes up his argument and begins thus, Rom. iv. 4. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not," or pays no respect to ceremonies, "but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith

“ is counted for righteousness.” Ungodly is here to be understood the heathen or gentile world, to whom the gospel was sent; who, by their repentance and turning from sin unto God, as required of them in their accepting of the gospel, were freely pardoned and accepted of God. Answerable thereto, is 2 Cor. v. 19. *viz*, “ That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” “ Not imputing their trespasses,” may be here understood, the same as when an act of indictment is past, and offered to rebels; that, in virtue of laying down their arms and weapons of their rebellion, and returning unto their duty, as faithful and loyal subjects, they are thereby to be forgiven, and receive pardon for the guilt of their rebellion.

Hence, and to proceed, It is, therefore, now evident, from the foregoing, of all they, in whatever station, rank, or denomination of men, who hold of our being saved only in and through the merits and righteousness of another, being imputed to us (independent of every particular duty, as asserted by Augustian monks, and friars of that order), do thereby wound justice, like, in speaking after the manner of men, as with a dagger, under the fifth rib: for justice can never possibly take reward. No. Or be satisfied with an offence; but only either in punishing the offender himself; or by an unfeigned repentance for the offence, in his turning unto God. For if justice could be satisfied, in taking the

payment or price of an offence from another, in place of the offender, as represented by the above gentlemen, she could therefore be no more just. No; but only a mere underhand dealer, in whom there was no trust or truth to depend upon.

But to conclude, it therefore appears evident, from what is expressed in the foregoing, that imputed righteousness, according to these imputarian gentlemen, is by no means the gospel of God, taught by Jesus Christ. No: for of this we may be as sure as we are of our own existence, that a righteous and just God, will neither impute righteousness where it is not, nor overlook it where it is. No, he will not: for it is expressed thus, Prov. xvii. 15. "He that justifieth the wicked" or ungodly, "and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord."

From hence, if a man were, therefore, saved by imputed righteousness, according to the imputarians, this would not only confound justice, but would entirely destroy and put an end to virtue, contrary to the gospel of Christ; which, in express words, is no less than a stealing men out of their salvation; therefore, must certainly be a damnable doctrine.

Lastly, If Luke, where speaking to those who relied on Judaism, is to be credited, repentance is the express condition of being saved by the gospel: for they are all told positively, saying, Chap. xiii. 5. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Except ye repent of your sins, and turn therefrom unto God, ye cannot be saved.

DIALOGUE III.

*Christ having Died a Sacrifice, a False Doctrine;
therefore, not to be received.*

JUD. **A** FEW days ago, as we were conversing together, after some little pause in our discourse, you promised not only to show, but likewise to prove, that the gentiles were taught the gospel, as independent of Judaism, or of Christ having died as a sacrifice to take away sin, as though Moses had never existed.—If you really think, said I, that the gentiles were taught the gospel, without reference to that system, or of Christ's death having no respect to the sacrifices contained therein, *viz.* the ceremonial law; as you seem to be quite at leisure this afternoon, I hope you will, therefore, be so good as to make it appear.

GEN. In answer to your request, if you will be pleased to attend, I hope I shall, therefore, discharge myself of the promise, you lay claim to, on that head.

JUD. I am not only willing, but even ready to hear you upon that subject.

GEN. Not only your request, but your desire of being instructed, invites me to answer your demand, concerning the above. That the gentiles were taught the gospel independent of Judaism, is a point I have already discussed; therefore, needs not be resumed. And

as for Christ having died, as a sacrifice to take away sin, it is without foundation, in that gospel wherein the Gentiles were taught: and that the word, sacrifice, mentioned therein, has no such meaning, as to what you allude to it: and for solution thereof, I shall refer you to each of the following texts, where the word, sacrifice, is exprest. For which, see Rom. xii. 1. " I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of
" God, that ye present your bodies a living
" sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which
" is your reasonable service." Chap. xv. 16.
" That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ
" to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of
" God, that the offering up of the Gentiles
" might be acceptable, being sanctified by the
" Holy Spirit." 1 Cor. v. 7. " For Christ our
" passover is sacrificed for us.

In the commencement of christianity it was generally the case, that such as had been proselyted to Judaism (because worshippers of the true God), were the first that embraced the gospel. Such, therefore, being commonly eldest in the faith, in every church; and as they being first, were esteemed as having been most active, in proselyting others to the christian faith. Such as these, may be supposed them, to whom the apostle speaks, by the phrase, passover and sacrifice: for if they had not been formerly acquainted with Judaism, there had no such terms been exprest unto them, who were discharged against receiving it.

Further, see also, Eph. v. 2. " And walk

“ in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and
“ hath given himself for us, an offering and
“ a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling fa-
“ vour.” Phil. ii. 17. “ And if I be offer-
“ ed upon the sacrifice and service of your
“ faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.” See
also Chap. iv. 18. “ But I have all, and a-
“ bound: I am full, having received of Epa-
“ phroditus the things which were sent from
“ you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice
“ acceptable, well pleasing to God.”

And to conclude, See likewise, 1 Peter ii. 5.
“ Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spi-
“ ritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up
“ spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Je-
“ sus Christ,” The above texts, are all and
whole, wherein the term, sacrifice, is exprest
to the Gentiles.

From hence, it is therefore necessary, to
consider each of these different texts apart, that
we may know what relation the term, sacrifice
(exprest therein), bears to Christ's having been
made a literal sacrifice for sin. In the first
place thereof, we are commanded to present
our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable
unto God. In the second, the apostle speaks,
as that the offering up of the gentiles might
be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy
Spirit. The third, I have there considered by
itself. In the fourth, he is there exprest, as
being a sacrifice of a sweet smelling favour to
God. In the fifth, the apostle speaks of him-
self, saying, if he should be offered upon the
the sacrifice of the Philippians' faith. In the

text, he there speaks of what he himself received of the Philippians, being an odour of a sweet smell; which is there called a sacrifice, acceptable and well pleasing to God. In the last, the apostle Peter, in expressing himself to those whom he wrote to, styles them an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, *viz.* purity of mind, chastity of body, upright lives, works of mercy, charity, and a readiness to suffer, and even to die as martyrs for their religion, if called to it.

Further, he is likewise said to have been not only a sacrifice, but also an atonement, a propitiation, a redeemer, a mediator, a ransom, a deliverer, and a saviour: all of which terms they allude to Christ, and are likewise applied in the very same sense to men.

Besides what is just now expressed, in the above, we are said, in complying with the will of God, to offer up the sacrifice of righteousness; the sacrifice of prayer; the sacrifice of praise; the sacrifice of joy; the sacrifice of a broken spirit; the sacrifice of thanksgiving; the sacrifice of communicating: for with such sacrifices, God is said to be well pleased. These, with different other terms used, are likewise applied to men, the same as to Jesus Christ: all of which, implies the invalidity of that doctrine or hypothesis, wherein Christ is held forth by Judaizing teachers, as a sacrifice for sin.

JUD. But Christ is likewise spoke of as a Mediator; and not only as a Mediator, but an intercessor with God for us.

GEN. Most justly exprest; for what he has declared and set before us in the gospel, for our direction, answers both, and every other meaning wherein he is spoke of, or exprest in such a manner. For Christ, no doubt, was invested with an unlimited degree of the love and rich mercy of God; therefore, may very justly be said, in his doctrines, to act as Mediator and Intercessor with God for us, in order that the sentence might be delayed from being immediately put in execution, by justice, against the offender; so that, by his giving ear to mercy, he may thereby await the repentance of the sinner.

Further, it is likewise exprest, Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved:" or rather, whereby we can be saved. Hence, there is no other name given under heaven, whereby the will of God hath been declared for the salvation and good of men, wherein he has promised pardon and forgiveness to us, upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto him.

But further, we are also said to be saved by the mediation of Christ; but this mediation, by which we are saved, is by the doctrines which he taught in declaring to us the will of God; and that also consists, in conforming our lives, agreeable to the tenor of what is there set before us in the gospel.

In proof of what is here exprest, being the true import of the above, it is said, that every

one shall be judged by Christ; but Christ saith, It is not I that judgeth you; it is the word (or doctrine) that I have spoken, that judgeth you; that is, that every ones conscience judgeth him, and will be tried according to the nature of the doctrines which is there set before us in the gospel; and it is by these, and these alone, that we are to be judged; and it is by these only, we are to stand or fall, and be condemned or acquitted.

But further, in consideration of Christ being spoke of, and set forth by the apostles, under the character of a Mediator, an Intercessor, and the like; these designations, with others of like nature, exprest in the Jewish superstition, which was gathered from among the Pagan altars, and applied to the true God, and which the apostles applied to Christ, was not originally the opinion of Jews alone—No; but was an opinion received by tradition, among all nations; in which they were instructed by their priests, who made them believe, that as God or the gods had been offended, it was, therefore, necessary, that some superior being to man, should intercede in his behalf. On this supposition, some thereof chose angels, and others, men deceased, for this office: and in process of time, erected temples and images unto them, and honoured them with divine worship, in order to render them the more helpful and beneficent unto them. All of which took place, from a mere fictitious notion they had long entertained, from an opi-

nion conveyed to them by tradition, concerning the fall or sin of their first parents.

But further, concerning that of sacrifices, the origin of which, consisted altogether of fruits and vegetables; a portion of which, was set apart by the receivers, as a grateful acknowledgment thereof to the donor, by whom they were supposed to have been given. And it was only in after ages, when men began to add for use, to the fruits of the earth, the use of animal food, that animal sacrifices were introduced, on which so much stress is laid, as being more acceptable to the gods, than the mere simple produce of the earth. But to proceed,

Hence, it is therefore to be observed, that as the apostles had to deal with a promiscuous multitude, *viz.* of Jews and proselytes to Judaism, who were intermixed with those of the Gentile churches, they were afraid lest they should offend the Jews, and thereby have put a stop to the progress of the gospel among that people. And not only this, but they themselves being bred up under the Jewish dialect, their language was, therefore, much adapted to the religious stile of that people; which, no doubt, was the chief cause why the apostles used the ceremonial terms of their law (to which they were accustomed) in teaching of others. It is, therefore, now evident, from what is here expressed, that the word, sacrifice, in the above texts, was never either meant by the apostles, or understood by the Gentiles, of the death of Christ having been a literal sa-

crifice for sin; or of his having died, as asserted by you Judaizers, to satisfy justice for our offences. No.

JUD. But do not the prophets speak of him as such?

GEN. In what respect?

JUD. Do they not say, that he was bruised and died for our iniquities?

GEN. Yes; but that by no means implies his being made a sacrifice, as may be understood from what is there exprest by Isa. liii. 5. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." The prophet being, therefore, perfectly sensible of the imperfection of the Mosaic system, and necessity of its being abolished and set aside, in order that another more perfect might take place, and be established in its room, was entirely assured that the Jews, his kinsmen according to the flesh, who had been so long prejudiced in its favours, could by no means either dispense or part with it. This, no doubt, is what the prophet perfectly foresaw, and was fully persuaded of the bloody scene that certainly awaited the person, appointed of Almighty God, for the accomplishment of so great and masterly an event.

Thus, the prophet being, therefore, fully assured of the bloody and dismal fate, that awaited the man (from that superstitious and bigoted people; but more especially their priests),

who would not only proclaim, but also certify the pardon of sin, and acceptance of the sinner, upon his repentance and turning unto God, independent of the different fees, specified in their book of rates, and duties paid to the comptroller, and other officers of the Mosaic custom-house, for absolving that people from their legal pollutions. And to proclaim the pardon of sin, upon the above conditions, *viz.* an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, was no less than to defraud or rob their custom-house, set up of old by Moses (or rather the priests), of the different duties collected by and for the use of the different officers of said customs. This crime of proclaiming the forgiveness of sin, and absolution from the guilt or pollution thereof, independent of the different fees payable to the above consecrated gentlemen, was not only confiscation of goods, but even life itself. The prophet, therefore, under deep concern and consideration of the distant view of this tragedy, expresses himself, as in the above. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." And likewise, part of verse 12. "He was numbered with the transgressors." The prophet hereby foreseeing the dismal fate that awaited the person who would take upon him to set aside and abolish that superstitious system, to which the Jews, his countrymen, were so much bigoted, tells here expressly, That he, *viz.* the person

who would take this office upon him, would not only be supposed, but used by that superstitious people, as one of the very worst of mankind, or even criminals. Nor was this circumscribed to Jesus Christ alone—No: for every one that holdeth fast the purity of his doctrine, *viz.* the simplicity of the gospel, and who are friends of truth, and enemies to superstition, would, no doubt, share thereof to this present day, if the civil authority did not interpose in their behalf.

Hence, all of which, may be said to have been figuratively or allegorically fulfilled by and upon Christ, in what he bare and suffered from that inhuman, wicked, superstitious, and ungodly crew.

Hence, all this Christ underwent, in redeeming the world from the power and dominion of sin, and from the imposition, and avarice, and insatiable ambition, wherewith mankind in general, were so much enslaved by priests, self-interested, and designing men.

From hence it follows, that the proclaiming pardon and forgiveness of sins to men, assuring them of a full absolution therefrom, with acceptance upon an unfeigned repentance and turning unto God, independent of the different custom-house fees and duties (falsely imposed upon that people), that was paid to the comptroller of said custom-house, and other officers belonging thereto, answerable to the above expected deliverance, was that which was exprest by good old Simon, Luke ii. 28,—32. “When he took up the child Jesus

“ in his arms, and blessed God, and said,
“ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart
“ in peace, according to thy word: for mine
“ eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou
“ hast prepared before the face of all people
“ (*viz.* both Jews and Gentiles); a light to
“ lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy
“ people Israel.” It was born in upon the
good old man’s spirit, that he should not see
death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ,
or him who was to declare the will of God,
for their deliverance from that bondage;
whereby not only their minds, but also their
substance, was enslaved, by the avarice and
ambition of these consecrated gentlemen, the
priests; who, like those among ourselves, if
the civil power did not prevent, have assumed
the authority of Almighty God, for punishing,
even with death itself, all such whatever who
did either speak against, or infringe the laws
of their superstition. And as for that which
was taught by those whom they esteemed pro-
phets or wise men among that people, and
also by Christ himself, who confirmed the
same by his death, that God was willing to
pardon sin, and accept of the sinner, upon an
unfeigned repentance and turning unto him,
independent of punishing the offender (or some
other one in his room and stead, according to
the received opinion), is what the world, *viz.*
both Jews and Gentiles, was altogether igno-
rant of; and, therefore, could neither admit
nor dispense with, when preached unto them
by the apostles.

JUD. If the death of Christ was not a literal sacrifice, typified by those of the ceremonial law, what do you then say to that which is expressed by him, before he suffered, concerning his death? For which, see Matth. xxvi. 28.

“ For this is my blood of the New Testament,
“ which is shed for many, for the remission
“ of sins.”

GEN. In answer to what is here expressed,
“ This is my blood, shed,” as a testimony in confirmation of the doctrine I have taught, being from God. “ Shed for many, for the
“ remission of sins,” for all such whatever, as will repent and turn unto God, and your iniquities (according to the tenor of my gospel), shall be blotted out. “ Shed for the remission
“ of the sins of many;” shed or poured out, in confirmation of the truth of the doctrines he taught, *viz.* the pardon of sin, upon our repenting and turning unto God, by living in obedience to his will, as required and set before us in the gospel. Answerable to the above, is that text, 1 John i. 7. when speaking to the Jewish strangers scattered abroad; “ But if
“ we walk in the light, as he is in the light,
“ we have fellowship one with another; and
“ the blood of Jesus Christ, cleanseth us from
“ all sin.” So that, by our complying with the different duties, contained in the gospel, we thereby imitate Christ; and by virtue of which, partake of whatever blessings are annexed thereto, as promised in his gospel to all such as obey him.

JUD. I am sure we are taught that Christ

died as a literal sacrifice, and that his blood was poured out as a price to atone and satisfy justice for the sins of men.

GEN. That Christ died as a literal sacrifice, and that his blood was poured out as a price to satisfy justice for the sins of men, is only a catholic doctrine, imported from Rome, by John Calvin; who, by making the gospel harmonize with Judaism, was neither Jew nor Christian.

From hence it follows, that to set forth the death of Christ, as a literal sacrifice, is thereby to confound the gospel, with the most abominable rites of Pagan superstition, which is no less than a disgrace to every religion whatever, that is held forth under the knowledge of the true God.

JUD. But Christ was typified by sacrifices.

GEN. If sacrifices were typical of Christ, he, for certain, would not only have referred thereto, and complied therewith himself, but would also have approved of all such as had respect, by conforming thereto, in keeping up the remembrance of that rite which took place in the early ages of the world; but this he no where does, which proves that sacrifices and the death of Christ, have not the smallest reference or relation to one another. Now, since the death of Christ, hath in no where been held forth to the Gentiles for their salvation, under the rites and shadows of the ceremonial law, it is therefore now evident, that when he is set forth to the Jews, under any of these types and shadows, they relate only to a

figurative or allegorical meaning, in such a manner as respects their deliverance from the bondage of such an inconsistent yoke.

And further, it is to be observed, that there was no sacrifices to be offered under the Jewish institution or law, for sins of a capital nature. Now, since this was the case, as in the above, that no sacrifices were to be offered under the Jewish law, for sins of a capital nature, if Christ's death is strictly to be understood as a literal sacrifice, offered to atone for the sins of men, answerable to what is said of his having been typified by these different ceremonies, his death could only in that respect, have satisfied for lesser pollutions, such as were (legally) purged by the law. And as for sins of a capital nature, they behoved to have remained just, in every respect, as much unsatisfied for by the gospel sacrifice, or death of Christ, according to the above, as under the law of Moses: for if the one was typically represented by the other, it, therefore, behoved to have answered in every respect, as strictly to that by which it was typified, which, for certain, arose no higher than that of legal pollution.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from what is here exprest, that the Gentiles were taught no such doctrine by the apostles, as that of Christ's death being a sacrifice for sin.

JUD. But when exprest by Christ to his disciples in time of the supper, as observed in the foregoing, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed (or rather is to be shed)

for many, for the remission of sins," seems to allude to the Jewish sacrifices under that law.

GEN. "Shed for the remission of sins," implies of its being (to be) shed, in confirmation of the doctrines he taught being from God, namely, that in living agreeable to the divine will; or that, if we come short of our duty, unfeignedly repent and forsake our iniquities, we shall be accepted of him.

Hence, if we should understand Christ's blood to have been shed, in a literal sense, as a sacrifice for sin, we may, in every respect, just as well believe, that when exprest by Christ of their drinking the cup, that the cup itself was to be drunk; and also, that when exprest, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," that they were literally to eat his flesh and drink his blood, when in life and present with them, as believe of his blood having been shed or poured out, as a literal sacrifice for the remission of sin. This, with what follows, "shed for the remission of sins," shed (by the Jews) in despite of his granting remission of sins, independent of the ceremonial law (or sacrifices therein contained), and in confirmation of the doctrines he received from God, and taught for the salvation of men.

But further, of the ceremonial law not being typical, and having no reference to the death of Christ, is evident from what follows. Not one syllable in the whole Mosaic system, points towards a future state. No: for the whole amount of said law, tends to nothing

more than only a mere legal or temporal purification; and a temporal satisfaction, is what can never possibly satisfy for a spiritual offence. No. Now, Since a temporal purification, cannot exceed a temporal satisfaction, Christ, therefore, dying only a temporal death, and not a spiritual (because Christ's Spirit is what could never possibly die), his death could only have taken away a temporal or legal pollution; and thereby have purchased or procured a temporal life, but not a spiritual. But this we know is what it did not: for men die ever since, even as before. For that which is laid out, can never possibly, upon justice, purchase any thing higher in value, than that which is given in equivalence. No, not possible: for the remission of sins; or as it is expressed in other words, Matth. xx. 28. "The Son of man" "came to give his life a ransom for many." But the word, ransom, implies redemption; or rather signifies a deliverance from bondage; but of this more afterwards.

JUD. But is not the doctrine of sacrifices, which you so much explode, of ancient date?

GEN. Yes: the doctrine, that justice could not be satisfied or iniquity pardoned, without sacrifice or shedding of blood, has its birth and first institution, from Paganism. But for the better understanding thereof: Men, in the ancient and early ages of the world, offered up part of the first fruits of the earth, as an oblation to God, in way of gratitude, or in return for what they received. But men no sooner

began to fall in with idolatry, and forget God, than they perverted the simplicity of the above offerings, and offered up the first fruit or firstlings of their flocks; and not only the firstlings of their cattle, but even their first-born, or fruit of their body, for the sin of their soul.

It is therefore now obvious, from what has been hinted in the above, that the origin of sacrifices, is nothing more than the blind production of pagan ignorance; who, by misunderstanding God, believed of his being altogether such a one as themselves.

Further, as concerning the authority of this ceremony, the prophet tells us expressly, that sacrifices are what God never desired or required of their hands. For which, see Matth. ix. 13. "For I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." And also, Hof. vi. 6. "For I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than burnt-offerings."

It is, therefore, now evident, both from the above, and elsewhere, that sacrifices were never required by God; but were falsely imposed and received, under the pretended sanction of God's authority. All of which teaches us expressly, that Christ never died as a sacrifice; but only in confirmation of his doctrine.

JUD. If Christ came not to fulfil the law, as observed elsewhere, that we might be set free; and died not as a sacrifice to satisfy justice for our offences, for what end did he die?

GEN. In answer to your objection, Christ was sent by God, unto this our world, to republish the spirituality of the law and religion

of nature, or reason, which had been so long and much defaced, through the cunning and artifice of priests. And also, to abolish Judaism, extirpate vice, and teach man his duty, by instructing him in the will of his God—In so doing he fulfilled the law. And likewise, that in virtue of the above, he might thereby prevent them from future misery, the just demerit of sin; which is inseparable from every evil (according to its demerit), unrepented of.

The above is a specimen of that for which Christ came; assuring every human soul, without exception, that by complying with what he commanded, they should be happy for ever.

And for proof that this is no vain or fictitious doctrine, he also died and gave his life unto the death, and sealed the truth thereof with his blood, in testimony of what he taught being from God; as likewise did his apostles in confirmation thereof.

And for an infallible proof of the above, that Christ gave his life a testimony, and died in confirmation of the doctrine which he taught, he saith unto Pilate, John xviii. 37. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." The above evidence, I apprehend, exceeds the power not only of rational, but of all the creatures that are made, to reverse.

Now, since Christ died, in confirmation of such a glorious system, as the re-establishment of virtue, and extirpation of vice, giving full

assurance of the rewards and punishments that are annexed, as being due to each thereof; let us, therefore, take heed to ourselves, and be aware against every doctrine that would teach us otherwise; or is either hurtful, or contrary thereto.

JUD. If Christ died, only, in confirmation of his doctrine being from God, every one that dies a martyr for what he professes, must be a proof of its being from God also.

The proof thereof is this; If the doctrines for which they die, be all of a piece with the nature, attributes, and perfections of God, like those of Jesus Christ, it will be a proof; but if they do not correspond therewith, it will be no proof of their being from him. For the evidence of a religion or of a doctrine being from God, depends altogether upon the above text, *viz.* their being of a piece with the nature, attributes, and moral perfections of the Deity: and not the test, upon the evidence of martyrdom. For if martyrdom were a proof of a religion or doctrine being from God, it would make not only Mahometanism, but even idolatry, divine also; for vast numbers of christians, in the eastern church, gave up their lives unto the death; choosing rather to die in favours of image-worship, than part with it.

Further, we may, therefore, now infer, from what has been exprest in the above, concerning what they call the orthodox faith, of Christ having died a sacrifice to atone and satisfy justice for the sins of men, and of their claim-

ing salvation, and being saved upon account thereof. I apprehend, there is not two doctrines under heaven, more parallel to one another, than that of the Jews (though wallowing in the midst of vice and deceit), in trusting of their being accepted of God, upon account of their being the children of Abraham, and those christians who imagine, that to believe of Christ having died as a sacrifice to take away the sins of men, they shall be saved, though wallowing in the midst of their iniquities.

JUD. However singular your sentiments are, I acknowledge there is nothing appears more just and equitable than they. But yet, after all, however just they appear, they will, no doubt, meet with opposition from the world.

GEN. Of that there is not the smallest doubt: for neither a change nor reformation in religion, was ever yet, nor can possibly be effected, in any nation, but with the utmost difficulty: for the priests who live thereupon, and the populace who believe at their desire, and act at their command, are they who have, in all ages, and will, no doubt, act in opposition thereto, with all their might.

JUD. Yes: it is by these, I acknowledge, and these alone, by which the world is kept in darkness; and whoever they be that are friends to truth, may assure themselves, they will, for certain, have these, *viz.* the above combination, acting in conjunction together, against them.

GEN. Yes; but such as would either per-

secute or be hurtful to others, either in person or interest, because of their holding sentiments different from what they themselves profess, are not christians. Yea; I repeat it again, that not one soul, that would willingly persecute or be hurtful to another, either in person, interest, or estate, because of his being of a different sentiment, can never possibly be a christian. No: for by acting contrary to the spirit of the gospel, in what Christ himself has commanded, they have neither part nor lot in that matter. No; nor the smallest claim thereto, for what they profess. Thus, as expressed by the Poet,

Such barren brains, no other wisdom teach,
Than damning talents, which they cannot reach.

For men to persecute, in being hurtful to others, on account of their religious sentiments, is an incontestible evidence of delusion, error, and deceit; and of their being enlisted in the devil's service, and entered into war against God, who, without respect of persons, acts charitably towards all. The procedure of such, being an express antidote against Christ's religion, may, indeed, make hypocrites, but can never possibly proselyte, or persuade men to believe, or be of the same opinion with themselves. No, it never possibly can. But to return,

Having, therefore, shown in what manner the world has been imposed upon by Judaizing teachers, I shall, in corroboration with the a-

bove doctrine (that Christ died not as a sacrifice, but in confirmation of what he taught being from God), recite part of what has been delivered by a judicious author upon this subject, who observes thereon as follows.

Grotius, Stillingfleet, and other learned men, have defended the two following propositions, as the fundamental doctrines of christianity; both of which are contrary to the Old Testament, and absolutely false.

First, They assert, "That there is a necessity of God's vindicating his honour to the world, upon the breach of his laws: if not, by the suffering of the offenders themselves; yet, by the suffering of the son of God, for the expiation of sin, by undergoing the punishment of our iniquities;" which appears to me to be the same thing as to assert, that God is not able to forgive sins freely.

Secondly, "That a person, notwithstanding his innocency, may oblige himself by an act of his own will, to undergo that punishment, which otherwise he did not deserve: which punishment, in that case, will be just and agreeable to reason." At present, I shall only consider the first of these assertions, leaving the other to be canvassed elsewhere.

Now, of all the religious notions I ever met with, none ever appeared to me more contradictory to the scriptures, or to the natural notions which sensible men of all religions have entertained of the power, mercy, and justice of the supreme Being, than these. Shall we

dare to assert, that a just and good God actually punishes the innocent; and yet is not able, without not only the consent, but the actual sufferings of another person, to forgive the penitent? Can forgiving a penitent be less agreeable to rectitude, than punishing the innocent? Will they ever persuade a Mahometan, to receive such an unworthy notion of the divine attributes; or think to convert a Jew to such a doctrine, as he can prove to be false from the law and the prophets? Yet we are confidently told, with great zeal for the honour of God, by these most learned and respectable divines, that God has no such power, except the Son of God shall suffer, as a sacrifice for the expiation of sin, by undergoing the punishment of our iniquities. For there is a necessity of God's vindicating his honour to the world, upon the breach of his laws, says Bishop Stillingfleet.

The learned Mr. Theophilus Gale goes still farther, and says, "We are not to consider what God can do of his absolute justice or dominion; for by this he may let sin pass unpunished: but we must consider, what by his ordinate justice, and moral constitution, he can do. And in this regard it is most true, that God is under a necessity of punishing sin, without a satisfaction; and he were inevitably unjust, if he did not punish it."

Dr. Clarke was not quite so peremptory and confident. This great man knew, that Christ is never said, in the New Testament, to be punished; though he is so often said to have suf-

ferred for us; and therefore does not venture to use that unwarrantable word expressly; but varies the phrase, and softens the doctrine, to make it less liable to exception. He tells us "When the honour of God's laws, had been diminished by sin, it was reasonable and necessary (notwithstanding God's power, and absolute right of forgiving; yet, in respect of his wisdom in governing the world, it was reasonable and necessary) there should be a vindication of the authority of his laws; and therefore, in that sense, of necessity, it was necessary, either that the sinner should perish, or some other satisfaction should be made in his stead." Which amounts to an assertion, that punishment of sin is always necessary, in the government of the world. But this is not true: for it may, for ought we know, be more agreeable, in many instances, to the wisdom of God, in his governing the world, to forgive, than to punish: and in all such instances, punishment will not be necessary.

From whence, then, does this new invented necessity arise, which limits and restrains the absolute right and free mercies of God? Is it a doctrine of scripture? By no means: the Old and New Testament are ignorant of it. Hear what Isaiah says, "I, even I, am he, saith the Lord, that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Chap. xliii. 25. And again, "Is my hand shortened at all, that I cannot redeem? and have I no power to deliver?" Chap. i. And the New Testament

V O L. III. H h

declares, that God forgives us freely; and there is not one text, in either of them, that speaks of the sufferings of Christ as a punishment; or one that says, they were intended to vindicate the authority of God's laws; much less mentions the necessity of such a vindication, and that God could not forgive sins without it. This is all human invention.

Dr. Sykes says, very truly, "When I looked over every passage that mentions the effect of Christ's death, or what he did, or why he suffered, I do not find the authority of God's laws mentioned among them. And can that be supposed an end of the sufferings of Christ, which is not once mentioned to us, at the same time that we are immediately and directly concerned in it; and perhaps we only."

But Dr. Clarke tells us, "This vindication is reasonable and necessary, notwithstanding God's power and absolute right to forgive. Does this necessity, then, controul his attributes, both natural and moral? Is it superior to God himself? Is any human law-giver so restrained, that he cannot, upon the proper submission and behaviour of the offender, forgive the transgression of his own laws? And is it not a perfection in God's prerogative, to commiserate every compassionate case; and temper and abate the severity of law? Is not this what we mean by mercy? And if the necessity of vindicating his laws, deprives him of his power, can he be said to be merciful, in any sense? And are we sure that God is un-

able to forgive the sins of imperfect creatures, in every other part of the universe, as well as in this puny orb, which we inhabit; unless the Son of God, or some other person, whose innocence and dignity, might make his sufferings worthy to be accepted of God, instead of the punishment due to the offender, should be punished, in every other world, as well as in this? If God can forgive the sins of his creatures, freely, in any other part of the universe, he may possibly be able to do it here; for what should restrain him? The Jews, in the days of Christ, were well persuaded from their scriptures, that God alone could forgive sins; but the modern christians have found out, that this is a mistake; and God alone cannot do it. But while the right and power of God to forgive, is allowed on all sides to be absolute, and to be founded upon the divine nature, it must follow, unavoidably, that the necessity of punishing, which is contrary to his right, cannot be absolute, but must depend upon the divine will; and consequently, may be executed or not, as shall be most agreeable to the divine wisdom.

And Mr. Gale himself says the same thing, in other words, "If God's punishing sin was from a necessity of nature, and not from the free constitution of his will, he must punish sin, as necessarily as he loves himself: and then it will follow, that God cannot relaxate his penal laws, as to the time, measure, and manner of punishing; yea, he cannot accept of the satisfaction of a mediator; for that is a degree

of relaxation." Court of the Gentiles, Part IV, Page 369.

But further, when I was considering the opinions of Grotius, Stillingfleet, and others, *viz.* that God could not forgive sin, except the Son of God should suffer as a sacrifice for the expiation of it, by undergoing the punishment which the sin deserved, I examined the doctrine, so far, as to show, that God has the power, consistent with his justice, of remitting entirely the punishment of the sinner, of his own free grace; which was all that the subject, I was there considering, required. But whether the passing over the punishment of the sinner, was to be brought about by transferring it upon the head of an innocent person, was left to be considered afterwards—There are some other subjects, besides this, which I have touched upon, in my former.

But to proceed, I have already proved, that guilt is entirely personal, and inseparable from the agent; and cannot possibly descend from one person to another: and that punishment cannot extend beyond the guilt, without injustice; and consequently, the punishment due to Adam, could not extend, as a punishment, to his innocent posterity. But the doctrine, I was then exposing, *viz.* the injustice of punishing the innocent, for the sins of the guilty, must be here discussed more fully; because the state of the question, with regard to the sufferings of Christ, is a little different from that of punishing Adam's posterity: and Bp. Stillingfleet has laid it in the fairest light it is capa-

ble of, by considering it as undergone voluntarily, and by choice; which is not supposed to be the case of Adam's descendants.

His words, which I have before quoted, are these, "That notwithstanding his innocency, a person may oblige himself, by some act of his own will, to undergo that punishment, which otherwise he did not deserve; which punishment, in that case, will be just, and agreeable to reason."

This I shall shew to be a mistake; though I must confess, after the christians had formed a notion contrary to scripture, that the sons of Adam were to be punished, for the sin which he had committed, before their existence, they could scarce avoid supposing, that another person should be punished for the sins which they commit themselves; for it would be hard to punish them for both. But what good can accrue from punishing the wrong person, rather than the right: the innocent, instead of the guilty, does not appear very clear; nor does it appear, that any thanks are due from me to a judge, who forgives me a sin that I did not commit. Moreover, as no being in the universe, is more merciful than God himself; if any one hath interceded with him to forgive, where God himself was unwilling to do it; such an intercession must be improper, and betray an error in judgment; and it must be highly derogatory to the perfection of God, to comply with it. And, therefore, I dare not suppose, that Jesus Christ did ever petition for any thing which God was

not as willing to grant, freely or gratis, as the Intercessor was to intercede for it gratis: nor that the Intercessor would think of shewing mercy, where the supreme Being saw fit to be severe; much less could it be possible, that the God of all mercies, should require an equivalence or payment for an act of mercy, which Christ was not only desirous that we should receive, but willing to go through great difficulties and distresses to procure for us; even so far as to pay the debt, or undergo the punishment himself. For in such a case, as Dr. Clarke observes, no acknowledgment is due to him to whom the debt is paid; but to him that paid it. Nor is it possible, that God should require of Christ, to pay a debt which was not due from him; or receive it, if it could be offered. But above all conception, it is most contrary to the divine attributes, that God should be so desirous of punishment, which he calls by the prophet his work, his strange work; his act, his strange act, Isa. xxviii. 21. as to inflict it upon the best of beings; choosing the most improper person in the universe to punish, as being the best beloved by him, and the most perfect; rather than not inflict it upon some one. All these absurdities follow, from the notion, that Christ was punished for the sins of men, in the sense in which a guilty person is punished; and there is no other proper meaning to the word. And yet, this is the opinion held among some christians; tho' there is not a single word of the guilt of Christ, or his punishment, in the whole New Testa-

ment. And all these difficulties may be avoided, by adhering to the words of scripture, and distinguishing what it does say, from what it does not say; that is, that he suffered and died; whereas it never says, that he underwent any punishment.

Now, though the difference between these be very remarkable; yet, as it serves some ends to confound them, and particularly, as it gives an opportunity to make the sufferings of Christ, under the idea of a punishment, appear inconsistent with the divine justice; it may be necessary to shew, wherein they differ. And,

1. Suffering may be the natural effect of matter and motion, without any act of volition; as, when a house falls, and thereby a person breaks a limb, or loses his life. But punishment is the act of a reasonable being, founded upon an act of judgment and condemnation.

2. Punishment or reward, finishes and completes the whole that is due to every moral action, whether it be worthy of the one or the other.

3. When an action deserves affliction, and the agent, in consequence of it, is by a judicial act condemned to suffer as he deserved, and all that was due to him, upon that account, is completed, so that there remains no debt or demand, such an affliction is properly a punishment. But,

4. When a person suffers an affliction, which was not due to him, or which he did not de-

serve to suffer by any bad action; or when he has received an excess of affliction, above what his actions have deserved, in these cases, there remains to be paid a recompence, in order to balance the accompt between what he had deserved, and what he had received: nor can the accompt be fairly settled, till that recompence be paid; and the recompence itself balances the accompt, and there remains no debt or demand, on either side: such an affliction, or such an excess of affliction, where a recompence is due, is not properly a punishment, but only an affliction or suffering.

He, therefore, that has a just expectation of reward, in recompence for his sufferings, cannot properly be said to be punished; but only to be afflicted or to suffer. And this was plainly the case of Christ, who, to this end, both died and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the dead and living; "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God."

In short, punishment is inconsistent with a recompence; because it is itself the recompence and balance of the accompt; which is the case of the criminal who suffers the law, in whom, it would be ridiculous and absurd, to expect to be rewarded for his sufferings. But suffering, when distinguished from punishment, is the fate of every one who undergoes pain, or labour, or trouble of any kind, upon any other account than that of guilt. And, therefore, as I argued before, with regard to the

posterity of Adam; so I argue now, with regard to Christ. If God is just, he will not extend the punishment beyond the guilt: for, if he does, he punishes the innocent. And as guilt is personal and inseparable from the agent (for no one can be guilty of an act, in a proper sense, but he that committed it), it cannot be transferred from one person to another; and consequently, neither can the punishment: and therefore, Christ could not be punished for us, by a just God; because he could not be guilty of our sins. And, if neither Christ is punished, nor the criminal, the sin is not punished, nor the law of God vindicated: for sin, in itself, is an abstract idea. Abstract the sin from the mind of the sinner, and it becomes an indifferent action: it has no existence, but in the obliquity of the sinner's mind; and is, in itself, incapable of reward or punishment. Sin can in no sense be punished, but by the suffering of the sinner. If any other person suffers punishment for it, he suffers unjustly; because unconnected with the guilt.

Now, if the punishment of the sin be understood to mean the punishment of the sinner (which is the only sense it is capable of), then the argument, that sin must necessarily be punished, that the laws of God may be vindicated, will extend farther than is intended by those who use it: for it will prove the necessity, that the sinner himself should be punished; and then a substitute can be of no use at all. For nothing can be more absurd

and inconsistent, than to suppose it necessary, that the laws of God should be vindicated, by the punishment of the sinner; and yet the sinner should be allowed to escape unpunished.

But what seems to be no less extraordinary, is the conclusion which is drawn from this hypothesis, that God's hatred to sin, is best shown, and the honour of his laws best vindicated, by such a substitution; which is the same thing, when translated out of sophistry into common sense, as to assert, that God's hatred to sin, is best shown by forgiving the sinner, and his love of righteousness, by punishing the righteous: or that God's laws are best vindicated, by punishing an innocent person, who hath never transgressed them, for the sake of saving a transgressor, who deserved to be punished for the breach of them. And all this absurdity depends upon the sophistical notion, that the sin is to be punished, and not the sinner; which, if ever so true, would serve no manner of purpose in restraining vice: since, if once the sinner was satisfied that he should get clear from personal punishment, he would not be likely to concern himself what would become of the sin.

And the injustice of punishing an innocent person, cannot be evaded, as bishop Stillingfleet, and other learned men, have imagined, by saying that Christ underwent a voluntary punishment; because, whether voluntary or involuntary, unless it can be proved that the punishment was just, and what he deserved (which could not be; because, he was inno-

cent), it is only asserting, that an innocent person submitted voluntarily to an unjust sentence; and his voluntary submission to it, made it just, which is absurd to suppose. And yet Dr. Stillingfleet has expressed himself, as if he would have us understand him in this sense: for he says, "He may oblige himself, by an act of his own will, to undergo that punishment, which otherwise he did not deserve." But how does his submission to it, make him deserve it? This is what can by no means be proved: for nothing can deserve it but personal guilt. The patient resignation of the sufferer, has nothing to do with the sentence of the judge. The whole question before him, is only, whether the culprit be guilty or not guilty; and if he condemns the innocent to suffer punishment, his sentence is unjust.

Dr. Samuel Clarke says, "Though to punish an innocent person instead of the guilty, is evidently unjust; yet to permit an innocent person to take it (that is punishment) upon himself, is by no means so." And, bishop Stillingfleet says, "That a person, notwithstanding his innocence, may oblige himself by an act of his own, to undergo punishment." So that, according to Dr. Clarke, God only permits Christ to suffer; and according to bishop Stillingfleet, Christ obliges himself to suffer. Be it so; but where are we now? Is not the question entirely altered? If this be the truth, it is not God who punishes Christ; but Christ who punishes himself by God's permission. And then, where is the necessity

of God's vindicating his honour to the world? If he only permits it to be vindicated, on the other hand, How can it be said he has the power to forgive, if the forgiveness depends upon the will of another person? This supposition destroys both his absolute and ordinate power: for as John Fox tells us, in his sermon at St. Paul's cross, "Cause, for Christ to die, there was not. As his life was innocent, so there was no law to condemn him. No: neither his Father, saving his justice, could lawfully enforce him: only his own good will, and obedience to his Father's will, and none other." But does the scripture ever use such language? Did God only permit Christ to come into the world, and die; or did he come because the Father sent him?

As to what Dr. Clarke supposes, that Christ might take the punishment upon himself, if he means that Christ could consider it as a punishment, it is impossible; for he knew himself to be innocent, and that the punishing of the innocent would be an abomination in the sight of God; because unjust. Why then will not the christians clear themselves of these difficulties, by keeping close to the words of scripture, and declaring that he suffered for us: or that he suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, in which there is no difficulty? for he that voluntarily undergoes any affliction, to save a guilty person, can no more be said to be punished for him, than if he underwent the same affliction to save an innocent one, the act being the same in both cases. And

yet, he may be said to have ransomed him; to have sacrificed his life for him; and to have redeemed him by his blood (if he died in the cause, whether the person, for whose sake he suffered, was innocent or guilty): but he cannot be said to be punished for him; because punishment supposes guilt in the person who suffers. Nay, though he should judge himself to be guilty, which he must do if he submitted to suffer as a punishment, the truth would be, that he had passed a false judgment upon himself, which would give no right to any one to punish him, who knew his innocence. In short, it is impossible that Christ should consider himself as guilty; and consequently, impossible for him to believe his sufferings to be a punishment (and it is plain that he did not; because he suffered, with a reward in view, which is inconsistent with the nature of punishment): and it is impossible that God should punish him; because he was without spot, at the very time he suffered death. It is worth while to observe how this doctrine, of his punishing Christ for our sins, hath been altered, and softened, and given up with, inch by inch.

The learned Theophilus Gale, speaking of God's absolute justice, says, "By this absolute justice and dominion, God can inflict the greatest torments, even of hell itself, on the most innocent creature:" and he quotes Suarez, saying, "We must allow that God, as supreme Lord, can inflict on an innocent man, all that evil, that is in the torments of

impossible
absolutely

hell." And Gale adds, "That God did, de facto, inflict the highest torments on an innocent, pure, spotless creature, even the human nature of his own Son, is most evident." Court of the Gentiles, Part IV. Page 368.

Bp. Stillingfleet softens the matter, and says, "Notwithstanding his innocency, a person may oblige himself, by some act of his own, to undergo that punishment, which otherwise he did not deserve: which punishment, in that case, will be just and agreeable to reason."

After him, Dr. Samuel Clarke says, "Tho' to punish the innocent, instead of the guilty, is evidently unjust; yet, to permit an innocent person to take it upon himself, is by no means so."

Lastly, Mr. James Foster, after all these opinions had been canvassed and found wanting, expresses the same doctrine with John Fox, "I must own, I cannot see how it could be unjust or tyrannical, to propose, even to an innocent person, to suffer with his own free consent, in order to promote so great a good; especially if we suppose what the christian revelation expressly teaches in the present case, that he would be gloriously and amply rewarded for it. Foster against Tindall.

If it be said that this is only a dispute about words, I answer, it is a dispute of the utmost consequence to be precisely understood, in the true sense. For if we allow the sufferings of Christ to have been a punishment, we must allow, that, in punishing him, the supreme Being acted an unjust part; and as long as it

is maintained to be a christian doctrine, we can never expect that either Jews, Mahometans, or Deists, will be converted to Christianity. But this is not the only instance, in which altering the words of scripture, hath obstructed the progress of christianity.

2. There are some christians, who, in order to see the justice of God, in the punishing of Christ for our sins, and our forgiveness by his righteousness, have invented a notion, they pretend to find in the New Testament; which, if true, must destroy all our reasoning, upon the nature of God's justice, and all our hopes in the practice of virtue; and that is the doctrine of imputed sin, and imputed righteousness; by which they understand, that, on the one hand, our sins are all imputed to Christ; and he is punished for them; and his righteousness is imputed to us; and we are rewarded for it. But we may be as sure as we are of our own existence, that a righteous and just God, will neither impute righteousness, where it is not, nor overlook it where it is: "For he that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." Prov. xvii. 15.

The scripture phrase, of imputing righteousness, in the true sense of it, as given us by the apostle of the Gentiles, means neither more nor less, than the forgiveness of sin. He tells us, David describeth the man, to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Bles-

“ fed is the man to whom the Lord will not
“ impute fin.” Rom. iv. 7. 8. Where we fee,
that imputed righteoufnefs is equivalent to the
forgiving iniquities, the covering of fin, and
the not imputing of fin: in which fenfe the
doctrine is very plain and intelligible, and the
figure of fpeech very natural. For as he that
takes away an obftruction to the fight, is faid
to give fight; and he that takes away an ob-
ftruction to our health, is faid to give health:
fo, he that takes away fin, which is an ob-
ftruction to our righteoufnefs, is faid to give,
or impute, righteoufnefs; and it is upon this
account, that Chrift is called the Lord our
Righteoufnefs.

3. If it be then asked, upon what ground
the chriftians have founded the ftrange opini-
on of vicarious punifhment; fo derogatory to
the attributes of God, and fo contrary to the
whole tenor of fcripture; it muft be replied,
they have founded it upon figurative expreffions,
taken literally; and upon texts of fcrip-
ture, written by Jews, and intended to be un-
derftood agreeable to their language, customs,
and religious ceremonies; and then interpret-
ed by the customs and ceremonies of the hea-
then philofophers, who had relinquifhed Pa-
ganifm, and become Chriftians.

The chriftians tell us of the many mixtures
and additions, which Philo has thrown into
his works, out of a vain and eager defire, which
is alfo obfervable in Jofephus, to adapt the
Jewifh laws and theology, to the tafte of the
reigning philofophy of the Gentiles of their

times.* The observation is just: but this vain and eager desire has not been a failing peculiar to the Jews; but common to all nations. Dr. Henry More, and more lately Dr. Middleton, have shewn it in many customs and ceremonies of the Romish Church, which appear to be old heathen rites, new vamped, and adapted to christianity; and therefore, it is but just that the christians should bear their part in the accusation, as well as we: and we may safely return them the compliment they have bestowed upon Josephus and Philo, with interest; by making reprisals upon Origin, Clem. Alexand. and almost all their primitive writers. For when the heathen philosophers, among which were many of the followers of Plato, did in great numbers receive the christian religion; and very few of them knew any thing of the idiom and genius of the Hebrew language, or the nature of the Jewish ceremonies: they also seem to have been as vainly eager and desirous to interpret the figures, allusions, doctrines, and ceremonies of the Old Testament, and particularly their sacrifices, according to the notions which they had imbibed among the heathens, before their conversion: sometimes explaining the christian doctrine, by the Platonic philosophy: sometimes carrying the allusions farther than was intended by the writers; sometimes giving their ceremonies a sense entirely heathenish; and thereby introducing a language into the christian church, which the genuine system of

* Pyle, on Heb. i. 1.

Judaism was a stranger to. And among these vain and eager accomodations of Judaism to Gentilism, was introduced, at first, the notion of vicarious punishments: For Judaism knows no such doctrines; and if it was not the sense of the Old Testament, it can never be the sense of the New.

4. The doctrine, which we find in the Gospels and epistles, is this: That the blood of Christ was shed for many, Matth. xxvi. 28. For the remission of sins; or, as it is expressed in other words, The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many, Chap. xx. 28. St. Paul expresses the same doctrine variously. He gave himself a ransom for all, 1 Tim. ii. 6. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, Tit. ii. 14. He was delivered for our offences, Rom. iv. xxv. God gave him up for us all, Chap. viii. 32. He died for our sins according to the scriptures, 1 Cor. xv. 3. He gave his life for the sheep, John x. 15. Christ our passover was sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. v. 7.

All these texts are manifestly intended to express the same doctrine. And the first question, in order to explain the sense of it, seems to be this: in what sense these things were done for us; whether in our stead, or on our account, and for our advantage? The English word, for, and the Greek words (*anti uper*) being capable of any one of these senses.

Now, if the true doctrine be, that these things were done upon our account, or for our advantage; the word, for, would have the

same sense in all the texts: but if the true doctrine be, that they were done instead of, the sense of the word will not be the same in the different texts; but must be greatly varied. For Christ could not be delivered, instead of our offences; nor die instead of us: for if he did, we should not die ourselves. Nor could he be our passover, sacrificed for us, in our stead: for we were never sentenced to be sacrificed: and the passover was not a sin-offering; and therefore, these things could not happen, in our stead, but only upon our account, and for our advantage.

If it be said, that Christ gave himself a ransom for us, 1 Tim. ii. 6. and was therefore sacrificed in our stead, it must be observed, that the payment of a ransom, is no sacrifice; and therefore no vicarious sacrifice: it means no more than that he died to save us. The word, ransom, means literally, the price of redemption; but this is only when the redemption signifies, literally, a deliverance from captivity, by a price paid. But as a deliverance from captivity, may be brought about by power, or other means, the word, ransom, in such a case, must be figurative, and signify the power, or other means, by which we are delivered; and the case must be the same, where there is no captivity; but merely a deliverance from any kind of affliction. Thus God redeemed the Jews from Egypt; not by a price paid, but by power and an outstretched arm. And thus Moses is called a redeemer (though translated a deliverer, Acts vii. 35.) And Dr. Sykes ob-

serves, that there are above fifty instances in the Old Testament, where the word, to ransom, means barely to deliver; without any price or ransom paid at all. But, if a ransom must always suppose a price paid, I would ask, What was the price paid by the redeeming angel, spoken of by Jacob; and called the angel that redeemed him from all evil?

Now, our deliverance from sin and death by Christ, is an act of power, like the deliverance from Egypt; and the power of delivering, was gained by a life and death of obedience: for Christ suffered, and died, and revived, that he might be the Lord of the quick and of the dead. His death, therefore, was not so properly, nor so immediately, the ransom or price paid for our redemption, as the price paid, in order to gain the power to redeem and become a Prince and a Saviour; and our redemption or deliverance, was the effect of this power, and is gained immediately by the exercise of it.

This will appear more plainly, when we consider, that the same figurative expressions are used of God the Father; who is likewise called our Redeemer; and is said to have bought us with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 20. and to have given up his Son for us all. But to whom did God the Father pay the price, or the ransom? Certainly, to no one: the words, therefore, can only be figurative; and meant to express the method, by which God hath saved us, *viz.* by giving up his Son to death; as Christ hath saved us, by giving up himself.

And this very small difference, whether the death of Christ be the immediate cause of our redemption, and deliverance from sin and death, by way of ransom; or the immediate cause, by which he gained the power to ransom or deliver, makes a very great difference in the doctrines which follow from them: the one is scripture, and the other not so; the one exalts our notions of the supreme goodness, the other degrades them; the one supposes that God had a great scheme to accomplish, for the redemption or deliverance of man from sin and death; and that the sufferings and death of Christ, were proper to complete it in the wisest and most effectual manner; and that Christ was willing to undertake whatever God should please to appoint, in order to accomplish that end; and accordingly he died, and for his obedience to death, received as a reward, the power of ransoming or delivering from sin and death; and as it was by his obedience to the will of God, which was completed by his death, that he gained the power to ransom or deliver; his death, itself, is figuratively called a sacrifice, and a ransom; tho' the actual deliverance was the exercise of that power.—This is very intelligible, and agreeable to wisdom and rectitude; so that, in the strict sense of the word, he was not so properly the redemption and ransom, as the Redeemer and Ransomer; that is, the Deliverer or Saviour: the other doctrine is, that it was inconsistent with the nature of God's government of the world, that he should forgive a

finer, without vindicating the honour of his laws; and therefore, mercifully passing by the offenders, he punishes an innocent person in their stead; receiving his punishment as a full payment, satisfaction, and ransom. And thus God Almighty, the most benevolent, just, and merciful, of all beings in the universe, is supposed to redeem us from sin and death, to which we were in captivity, by punishing the innocent instead of the guilty, rather than forgive us freely; as the scripture declares that he has done.

The calling the death of Christ a ransom, in the sense of a price paid for our deliverance, is certainly as near to the literal sense, as a figure can well be; but it is not precisely the truth: it is the cause once removed, instead of the immediate and efficient cause: for, though the power of delivering or ransoming was gained by his death; yet the actual deliverance was effected by his life; so that, we are not saved by his death, but by his life, Rom. v. 10. that is, by a voluntary exertion of that power which he gained by his death. This death was therefore the immediate and efficient cause of his power; and the exertion of his power, the immediate and efficient cause of our salvation. Whereas, if his death had been merely a literal ransom or redemption, it could have reached no farther than the penalty of the first offence; and the regaining what had been before lost: but the effect of this power which he gained by death, or rather by his obedience to death, extends to another

life, and happiness in his kingdom. See the apostle's reasoning on this subject, Rom. v. 15, &c.

Furthermore, if we consider the death of Christ, as the immediate cause of our deliverance, in a literal sense, we must explain also in a literal sense, who it was that held us in captivity: and not only to whom the ransom was paid by Jesus Christ; but to whom the price was paid by God the Father. The ransom could not be paid literally to God, for he is the Redeemer; and he redeemed us, by giving up his Son to death: and though we read that we are redeemed to God, we never read of our redemption from him; and consequently the ransom and price paid, could not be literally paid to God. First; Because a literal ransom could not be paid to the Redeemer, or to the person who paid it: and, secondly, If it were a literal ransom, it must be literally paid to the person who held us in captivity; but we were not in captivity to God, but to sin and death (his servants we were, to whom we obeyed); and from these we were to be delivered and redeemed.

Was it then a literal ransom, which was to be paid to sin and death? This cannot be; because there are no such persons: there remains then no person to whom it could literally be paid, except we consider ourselves in captivity to the devil: but we never heard of any price that was paid to him; we are delivered from him by an act of regal power. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth, with the

holy Spirit, and with power; who went about doing good, healing all those who were oppressed by the devil, Acts x. 28. He took flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil, Heb. ii. 14.: and death is swallowed up in victory, Isa. xxv. 8.: and therefore, we give thanks to God, who hath given us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 57.: and this victory over death, is the victory over Samael, the angel of death; and consequently, there can be no ransom paid to him; but we are ransomed from his power, by the superior power of a Prince and a Saviour.

It is true, that Christ suffered great distress, in gaining this God-like power; yet not as an offender, but as a Prince, who undertakes great difficulties and dangers to deliver his country from ruin; whom God makes use of as his instrument to accomplish his will (as he spake both of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus); and afterwards rewards, because the pleasure of the Lord had prospered in his hands. But he is not to be looked upon, as if he were smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted, while employed in this dangerous and laborious service: nor are the difficulties he goes through, to be considered as vicarious punishments, by which he saves them from the destruction they had deserved; but as the voluntary sufferings of a great and glorious Prince, for great and glorious purposes. For he knew, that it was the design of God, that the world should be in-

structed in righteousness by him; and that he should suffer death, in carrying on that important work; and that God would reward his sufferings, in so good a cause, by raising him up to be a Prince and a Saviour.

We find in St. John's gospel, that the Messiah is called the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world: but it is no where said, that he did this as a victim or vicarious sacrifice. The allusion seems to be made to the liii. chapter of Isaiah; but the lamb is not there considered as a lamb to be sacrificed; but as a lamb to be sheared: and where it goes on to speak of him as making his soul an offering for sin, he is not considered as a lamb or victim, but as a man acting voluntarily, and offering up his life: and though in the apocalypse, he is spoken of as the Lamb that was slain, in allusion to the Jewish customs, he is never spoken of as a vicarious sacrifice: for they had no sacrifice of that nature.

That the word, sacrifice, is frequently used in a figurative sense, merely by way of allusion, both in the Old and in the New Testament, is undeniable. For we find, that the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, Psal. xli. 16.; and that he is pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, Psal. li. 18.; and in the New Testament, we read of the sacrifice of praise, Heb. xiii. 5.; and of a spiritual sacrifice, 1 Pet. ii. 5.; and our bodies are said to be a living sacrifice, Rev. xii. 1.; and the gifts sent by St. Paul to the Philippians, by Epaphroditus, are called

an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice well-pleasing to God; and to do good is called a sacrifice, with which God is well-pleased. And where the figurative use of the word was so common, even when there was no death, it would have been wonderful indeed, if it had not been sometimes applied to the christian sacrifice, where there was the real death of Christ; who voluntarily gave up his life to procure the good of mankind.

It is not, therefore, at all surprising, that St. Paul, who deals so much in figures, and alludes so continually to the Jewish customs, should speak of the death of Christ, as a sacrifice or an offering; and use the common sacrificial terms, by way of figure, without ever suspecting, that the words would be taken literally. But, on the contrary, if it be the true and literal sense, it is impossible to account for it, how the evangelists and the rest of the sacred writers, should never have mentioned it as such, in a plain and intelligible manner; especially, if it be a doctrine of such importance, and so essential to a true belief, as it has been represented by the moderns. Whereas, St. Paul himself speaks of it in a very indeterminate manner; sometimes as a peace-offering; sometimes as a sin-offering; sometimes as our passover; and sometimes as a propitiation: all of which expressions, when considered as comparisons or figures, are very just, though inadequate: but as all these sacrifices do, in some particulars, differ from one another, it is impossible they should be all true and exact

in the same literal sense; much less in a sense to which the Mosaic law was a stranger; as when a propitiatory sacrifice is explained, in the heathenish sense, to mean a vicarious sacrifice of life for life*: for the sacrifice among the Jews, had no such meaning; and consequently, the word, sacrifice, in the New Testament, which alludes to them, ought not to be so understood; as will farther appear from what follows.

1. That the life of the animal is never called, in the Old Testament, a ransom; nor is there any such expression, as life for life, soul for soul, equivalent ransom for soul, or the like. Nor was the atonement made, by the death of the animal, as is generally imagined by the common people; but by the sprinkling of the blood afterwards: for the atonement was made by the priest; but the office of the priest, who made the atonement, did not begin, till after the victim was slain by the person who brought it; and then the priests, the sons of Aaron, made the atonement, by sprinkling the blood about the altar, or by pouring it at the bottom of it, Lev. vi. 7. So that nothing vicarious can be proved, from the death

* The whole nation of the Gauls, says Cæsar in his commentaries, is much addicted to superstition; and therefore such as are greatly afflicted with distempers, or engaged in battles and dangers, either sacrifice men for victims, or make a vow that they will do so; because they think the divinity of the immortal gods, cannot otherwise be rendered propitious, than if the life of man be given for the life of man. CÆSAR'S Com. Lib. VI. Chap. xv.

of the animal; as the atonement did not consist in it.

2. As the Greek word (*antilutron*) is not to be found in the Old Testament; which certainly would be there, if the Mosaic sacrifices were meant to be vicarious: so neither does the Hebrew word *Copher* (*pice obduxit*), the original of what is translated the propitiatory or mercy-seat, convey any such meaning; but signifies in general to cover; and from thence is used for expiation, or atonement, or the covering of sin, in the sense in which it is said in Psal. xxxii.; and cited thence, Rom. iv. 7. Blessed are they whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin. According to which sense, he that forgives, is himself the propitiation; as Christ is called by St. John, Chap. ii. 2. and iv. 10. So that nothing vicarious in the nature of the Jewish sacrifices, can be urged from the etymology of the word.

3. Instead of the Jewish atonement being vicarious sacrifices of life for life, like those of the Druids, it is notorious, that, according to the Mosaic law, 1. No atonements could be made, where life was forfeited. 2. Atone-ments were made, where there was no guilt; as for places and things, and natural infirmities, and accidental uncleanness. 3. Atone-ments were made, without the death of any animal, or the shedding of blood; as by an offering of flour, &c: and consequently, these sacrifices could not possibly be meant to be vicarious.

In truth, sacrifices were at first designed as free-will-offerings, and gifts of the first fruits of the earth or fold, and men offered up to God such things as were under their care, by way of thankfulness for the increase of them, and not by way of atonement for sin. Accordingly, the sacrifices of Cain and Abel are called *minchas* or gifts; and were taken from the fruits of the ground and the firstlings of the flock.

The origin of sacrifices was the same, both among the Jews and Pagans. Aristotle tells us, that the ancient sacrifices and assemblies to that end, were after the gathering in of the fruits, for an oblation of the first fruits; and in Rome, they tasted not of their new corn or wine, before the priests had sacrificed the first fruits, according to the order of Numa; and the same was the law of the twelve Tables; and this is confirmed from the ancient custom of offering in the first place some of the hair cut from the victim's forehead, which was called first fruits: which action is likewise expressed by Homer.

The same appears from translating *Therumah* (offerings) by the words, first fruits; Exod. xxv. 23. though it was an offering of gold, and silver, and brass, and purple, and scarlet, &c. And this original meaning of sacrifices, as gifts of the first fruits, continued, for any thing we know to the contrary, till the days of Abraham.

And such writers, as have fixed a narrower signification to the word, sacrifice, have only

involved the subject in Egyptian darkness; and fatally perplexed and exposed to scorn and contempt, the simplest and most rational institution in the world.

Abraham is called, by Cyril, a lover of sacrifices; but, of what nature his sacrifices were, we are not certain. The sacrifice mentioned in Gen. xv. was only in vision, as the Arabians, in Pirke R. Eliezer, expounded the whole chapter; and it appears from comparing the fifth and twelfth verses: in the fifth, God brings Abraham into the field, at the shutting up of the evening, and shews him the stars of heaven: and in the twelfth verse, it is yet day, and the sun is not gone down.

In this vision, Abraham enters into covenant with God, according to the ceremonies of the Chaldeans, among whom he was educated: upon which Cyril says, God, the great governor of the universe, condescends to the weakness of the good old man, and ratified the oath, according to the usual ceremonies of the Chaldeans. And this method of making and renewing covenants afterwards continued in use, by the supposed command of God; and was used upon no other occasions.

But further, if we consider the death of Christ merely in the sense of a Mosaic sacrifice for sin, or even as a vicarious suffering of one person instead of another, the utmost advantage that can possibly be gained by it, can be no more than the forgiveness of sin, and a freedom from punishment (as I have observed of a literal ransom); which is a most unworthy

notion of the sacrifice of righteousness which he made, and for which he was rewarded with power, not only to forgive sin, but to raise the dead, and judge the world in righteousness, and to give eternal life to as many as he will. These are blessings, which extend far beyond the nature of a Mosaic or vicarious sacrifice; and cannot be accounted for upon any such principle.

From all these considerations it seems to appear; that we have no reason to believe, that what Christ did and suffered, does exactly and literally answer to an expiatory sacrifice, rather than to any other image to which it is compared. For the very variety of the comparisons, is a proof, that it does not resemble any of them throughout; and indeed it was of such a nature, and had such extraordinary effects, that nothing which ever before happened, can fully express it. And therefore, such allusions, or metaphysical expressions taken from the Jewish customs, should not be expected to correspond, in every particular: it is sufficient to see the general import and meaning of them.

But what fully proves, that the different expressions cannot be taken in an exact literal sense, is this; that, if any one of them be literal, not one of the rest can be so. For, if the sufferings of Christ be the literal payment of a debt, and he pays our debt for us, which God was not so merciful as to forgive, then his death is not literally a ransom from our captivity to sin and death, nor a vicarious pu-

nishment, nor a propitiatory sacrifice; nor is the debt forgiven freely by God, but transferred from one person to another, to pay it for us: so that, what we once owed to God, we now owe to Christ; and if that be the case, the debt still remains; unless we will venture to say, that Christ will forgive, where God the Father will insist upon a recompence and payment.

2. If it be a literal ransom from captivity, it is no literal payment of a debt, but a price paid for the liberty of the captive; nor is it a punishment, nor a sacrifice, nor is our delivery gratuitous.

3. If it be a literal punishment, it is neither the payment of a debt, nor a ransom, nor a sacrifice, nor are our sins forgiven us at all.

4. If it be a literal sacrifice, according to the Mosaic law, it is neither the payment of a debt, nor a ransom, nor a punishment, nor can it be a sacrifice of different kinds at once, in a literal sense; but must be a sin-offering, or a peace-offering, or a passover, &c: and if it answers to any one of these, it can answer to none of the rest.

5. Lastly, if our sins are forgiven freely, there can be no literal payment of a debt, no literal ransom, no punishment suffered, and no victim slain: for where a sacrifice was offered, the forgiveness was never considered to be gratuitous. But to proceed,

Christ, therefore, was not a literal ransom; but he received power to ransom or deliver from sin and death: he did not pay the debt; but he

received power to forgive it: he was not punished; but he suffered, and thereby gained power to remit the punishment: his death was not an atonement, in the sense of that which influences God to save; but as the means by which God saves: and he did not reconcile God to the world; for God never was at enmity with it (for he loved the world); but he reconciled the world to God, by gaining it over to the worship of God, and the practice of righteousness. And in this sense, all these figurative expressions will be consistent; and Christ may be said to be a ransom, and a sacrifice, and an atonement, and yet our sins to be forgiven freely, without the payment of any equivalent, or satisfaction for it.

5. Several other expressions and phrases in scripture, alluding to the Jewish ceremonies, are pressed into the service of vicarious punishment; which it may be proper to mention here. The prophet Isaiah says, "He hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows," Chap. liii. 4. which some christians interpret to mean, that our sins were imputed to him, and he was charged with them, and punished for them: but the LXX. interpret the words thus; he bare our sins, and was grieved about us: and St. Matthew interprets them of his curing the sick and weak: for having said, he healed those that were sick, he adds, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "He took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," Mat. viii. 17. Now if the taking our infirmities and bearing

our sicknesses, does not mean the suffering our infirmities, and sicknesses in himself, but only the bearing them away or removing them from us, then, the bearing our iniquities, may also be understood to signify no more, than the removing away from us our sins and iniquities by forgiveness, Levit. xvi.

From hence, our fathers were certainly much mistaken, and so the prophet tells them, when they esteemed him to be stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: and some of the christians are now in the same error, who consider him as punished by God, and suffering, in order to vindicate his laws: but this could not be; because he is declared to be without spot or blemish, even at the very time he suffered, the just for the unjust, Heb. ix. 11. 1 Pet. i. 19.; and consequently he had no sins to answer for, or bear, in that sense. And besides, it is absurd to suppose, that he could suffer for the sins of men, as a guilty person; because he came down from heaven, with an ample power to forgive them, and did forgive the sins of many, even before his death. And consequently, when it is said, that he bare our sins, and our sins were laid upon him, Heb. ix. 28. Isa. liii. 6. it must be understood in the same sense, as when the apostle directs us to cast all our care upon God, 1 Pet. v. 7.: or, when the Psalmist says, cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, Psalm v. 22.: Where it does not mean, that God shall be made anxious with our cares, and feel the weight of our burdens: but mere-

ly, that he shall take them away from us. And thus the word is understood, in many places of scripture. *

But further, the christians seem by these interpretations to confound themselves; by putting forced and unnatural meanings upon phrases, which, in common use, every body understands in a popular sense. For, universally, when a lord or master is said to take upon himself the fault or error of his servant, it has no other meaning than this, that he excuses or forgives it: or, if the fault be committed against a third person, that he will take care the servant shall not suffer for it: but to carry the letter so far, as to suppose that the Lord himself will suffer the punishment due to the servant, is carrying the words to an extravagant sense, in which, such expressions are never intended to be understood; and especially, if the fault be committed against the lord or master, the notion of punishing himself for a fault committed against himself, is absurd beyond all conception.

1. In short, if the guilt of our sins was not literally laid on Christ, he could not, in jus-

* Dr. Sykes observes; the words of Isaiah (liii. 6.), in the original, signify, the Lord hath made to meet in him the iniquities of us all; that is, that in him contempt, pains, want, and even ignominious public death, fell to his lot: or, that he came into the world to suffer all these. What we render. iniquity, is in the original (eth Avon) the iniquity; or, the treatment of iniquity. He was treated as if he had been a great sinner; as if he had been appointed to bear the sufferings of us all. Page 75.

tice, be literally punished for them; because there can be no just punishment, but where there is guilt.

2. As the whole weight of sin consists in the consciousness of it, Christ could not bear the weight of our sin; because he could not be conscious of what he was not guilty of.

3. If the guilt of our sins was literally laid upon him, then, he was considered as guilty of them; and, consequently, he could not be without spot. But the scripture declares him to be without spot; and there is no spot, in a moral sense, but guilt.

4. If our sins are supposed to have been laid upon Christ, in the sense in which the sins of the people were laid upon the scape-goat (which was only symbolical; for the goat could not be literally guilty of them), then, he could not be a literal and legal sacrifice: for the scape-goat was so unclean and unfit for sacrifice, upon this very account, because he bare the sins of the people, though only in a figurative and symbolical sense, that the person who let him go, was commanded to wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water, before he returned to the camp, Lev. xxvi. 26. And the goat was called rejectaneous, or refuse, 1 Cor. iv. 13. Nothing can be therefore more absurd, and contrary to the genius of the Mosaic law, than to believe, that Christ was both an expiatory sacrifice, and yet that he bare our iniquities either in a literal or symbolical sense; for they are absolutely inconsistent with each other.

In a word, there is no more reason to ima-

gine, when Christ sacrificed his life for the good of man, that he did it to appease the wrath of God, than there is to imagine this to have been the intent of our father Abraham, when he drew his knife to flay his son. It is a contradiction to the whole system of christianity; which declares in many places, that God's sending his Son into the world, in order to save the world, proceeded from his love and good will to man, John iii. 16, 17. and vi. 38, 39, 40, 44. Acts iii. 26. Rom. iii. 25. and v. 8. Gal. iv. 4. Eph. iii. 2. Tit. iii. 4. 1 John iv, 9, 10, 11, 14, 19. And there is not a single word, in the whole New Testament, which mentions the least sign of anger in God, against Jesus Christ, or guilt in Christ, or punishment underwent by him.

6. Another objection which we ourselves have formerly made to christianity, is the narrow principles upon which it is founded; which though it comes from one of our own nation with a worse grace than from any other, yet we could not avoid observing it; while almost every christian we conversed with, positively insisted upon the damnation of every one that did not believe the abstrusest points of christianity (and much more christianity itself) in the same way with themselves; and were so sanguine in that persuasion, as to put it into their creeds: though, it must be owned, this conduct is condemned by some of their own people. Sir Paul Rycaut observes, very justly, "How can we expect or hope for the conversion of Turks or Heathens, when they

shall be afrighted at the church-gate, by some opposites to one another of their own divided persuasions, with the threats of hell and damnation; and meet almost as many anathemas, as when they remained infidels!"

Benjamin Ben Mordecai's Apology, to his friends, the Jews, for embracing christianity.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the different passages considered in the foregoing, respecting this subject, that the doctrine of a satisfaction (as understood by Judaizing christians, who have perplexed the gospel, in blending it with Judaism, and other Pagan rites; whereby it is not only confounded, but reduced to a mere jumble, neither Jewish, Christian, nor Pagan), is therefore not the doctrine of the gospel—No; but is only a mere counterfeit deception, ingrafted on Christ's religion: for there is not so much as one word of a satisfaction, either required of Christ, or said to be paid by him, to satisfy justice for the sins of men, as imposed on christianity—No, there is not so much as one syllable thereof, in the whole New Testament: and for proof of which, let them show but one single word of a satisfaction, either required of Christ, by God, or paid by him to satisfy justice, as in the above.

JUD. If the death of Christ was not a sacrifice, nor satisfaction for sin, In what respect was he a Saviour?

GEN. By teaching men the will of God; the way to life; and thereby to escape death:

for he that preventeth another from immediate danger, destruction, or ruin, may very justly be said, by effecting his deliverance, to have merited his salvation. Similar to what is here exprest; Christ, by instructing us in the will of God, in order to prevent our being overcome, through the evil and dominion of sin, has thereby merited everlasting life and salvation for us.

JUD. But after all that has been said, you very well know, that, as exprest in the epistle to the Hebrews, "Without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin."

GEN. The epistle to the Hebrews is a subject we have already discussed; and the contents thereof, appear, from said process, to have been politically wrote to the Jews alone (independent of the Gentiles), in order to take off the prejudices which they had so unjustly entertained against the gospel. And for proof thereof, the said epistle was rejected as uncannonical, till the latter end of the second, or beginning of the third century.

JUD. But though rejected, for the first two centuries, it might, in course, have been dispersed throughout all the Gentile churches.

In answer to your objection, If any thing, either necessary or profitable for salvation, was contained in that epistle, what then became of all the Gentile christians (in the two first centuries), that died without the knowledge thereof? Do you imagine they went to hell; or, that the gospel, contained in the Gentile epistles, was an imperfect system; and con-

sisted of no more than a half salvation? No: it, no doubt, was a full and complete salvation; or they had certainly been informed thereof.

JUD. But, as the Gentiles being ignorant of the ceremonial law, or customs used among that people, *viz.* the Jews, this may have prevented the apostles, from having taught them in the knowledge thereof.

GEN. In answer to your further objection; the epistles wrote to the Gentile churches, were not wrote to them, in their rude, their ignorant, and Gentile state—No; but were wrote some different years after they became converts to christianity; and therefore, if any thing necessary or profitable to salvation, was contained in any of these different figures, referring to the ceremonial law, the apostle had certainly acquainted them of it. And for proof thereof, he declares elsewhere, that he had kept nothing back from them, *viz.* these Gentile christians, that was profitable; but says expressly, That he had declared unto them the whole counsel of God.

Now, if there had been any thing that was profitable to the Gentile christians, in one or more of these different figures, contained in the ceremonial law, which they suppose refer to the death of Christ, would he, *viz.* the apostle, not have acquainted the Gentiles thereof? Yea, most certainly he would: for if he had not acquainted them thereof, he could by no means have said, That he had kept nothing back that was profitable; but had expressly

declared unto them, the whole counsel of God.

From this, it is now evident, that Christ by no means partook of the ceremonial law.

JUD. Did he not keep the passover?

GEN. Yes; but there was nothing implied in the passover, towards the pardon of sin—No: for the passover consisted of nothing else, than a memorial of their being delivered from bondage; and Christ supplies the abolishment thereof, with the supper, in remembrance of his death; in dying in confirmation of the doctrines he taught; in declaring to us the will of God, to deliver us from sin; that, by our complying therewith, we might be set free from its dominion. But such as believe the authority of Judaism, must first purge out the old leaven thereof, before they are fit to understand the above; and receive the pure simplicity of the gospel, or religion of Christ, independent of the corrupt adulterations, ingrafted thereon, by ignorant, self-interested, and designing men.

From hence, it is further evident, that whatever nominal terms are used in the epistle to the Hebrews, or others of like nature, wrote to the Jews, referring to their ceremonial law, has not the smallest relation to Christ's having died a sacrifice, to atone and satisfy justice for the sins of men; but only in confirmation of what he taught being from God. For this we know assuredly, that he gave up his life, and became obedient to an untimely, and not only

to an untimely, but the violent and unnatural death of the cross; on purpose, that he might thereby certify and confirm unto us, the evil and just demerit of sin, that was due unto us from God, upon account thereof. Whereby, that upon a just knowledge of which, and that by our applying the same aright, we might thereby take him for our example, by considering how much the evil nature thereof, was against God, and hurtful to ourselves. Whereby, it therefore had caused Christ, from an unfeigned love, to surrender and give up his life, as a lasting testimony against iniquity, that he might thereby deliver us from the power of its dominion. And for this very cause, he submitted, and was bound, crucified, and died, in order that we, by complying therewith (*viz.* the doctrines of the gospel), might be set free and live.

In the preceding night, just before this mournful tragedy took place, he there instituted and established the supper, as a lasting testimony to be kept up by us, in remembrance of our deliverance. And this he requires, that we, in obedience to his command, should keep up this ordinance of the supper, in remembrance of what he has done and underwent in our behalf, in his sufferings and death, in the accomplishing our deliverance. But there is one thing, in this ordinance, ought therefore to be strictly attended to, *viz.* that we conform our lives, in obedience to what he requires of us in the gospel: for to keep up the remembrance of his death, and yet walk contrary to

what he taught, which is the end and design thereof, is nothing else than a piece of solemn mockery.

Hence, we must likewise, therefore, be aware against every species of iniquity: for to indulge sin, when sensible thereof, would be no less, than to eat and drink to our own condemnation.

Further, it is therefore to be observed, the command, in this ordinance, is as follows; "Do this in remembrance of me." But let none, in the obeying of this command, imagine, like the Papists, that the bread and wine, used in this ordinance, are changed into the body and blood of Christ—No: for they may just as well, in every respect, believe, when it is said, "This cup," that the cup (itself, in which the wine is contained) is drunk: or, when the supper was served up by Christ, that the disciples did thereby really eat his flesh and drink his blood, while he himself was alive, and present with them: the one belief would be, in every respect, just as absurd as the other.

Hence, it may likewise be observed, that though it be required of us to obey this command, we are not to imagine of its being essential to our salvation—No: for though our duty is to obey, in remembrance of him who is the founder of our religion, we are not to suppose of their being any thing therein, additional to obedience, that can either further our acceptance; or not partaking thereof, hinder or prevent our salvation, any farther than

only the omission or neglect of said commandment.

Hence, and to proceed, as to the origin of this ceremony, it was an ancient custom for men, in the early ages of the world, to dedicate a feast, in memory of any great or wonderful event, in order that they might thereby keep up the remembrance thereof to posterity. Thus Moses, in the departure of that people, *viz.* Israel, out of Egypt, instituted the passover, or paschal supper, as a sacred rite to be kept up in remembrance thereof: in observance of which ceremony, Christ, therefore, in order to reconcile the Jews, his countrymen, to the gospel, as a new religion, replaces the passover with the supper or gospel feast: prudently retaining the image of the old, in setting up and establishing the new.

Thus, and for the better understanding of this subject, the gospel of Christ requires of us, that we lead pure, holy, and upright lives: and for this cause, he gave up his life unto the death, as a standing testimony of the doctrines he taught being from God. For in the celebration of this ordinance, he saith, "Do this in remembrance of me;" that is, of the life he lived, and doctrines he taught, and also died, in confirmation thereof.

Hence, the above teacheth us, that when we partake of the Lord's supper, we ought, therefore, to resolve, through his grace, to lead pure, holy, and upright lives; the same as we have taught and set before us, by Christ himself, in the doctrines of the New Testament.

And for this cause we are, therefore, ordered, to examine ourselves, whether our lives be such as are required of us therein or not, before we come to partake of that ordinance: for whoever profess themselves to be christians, and did not make it their duty to live as required of us in the gospel, and yet put forth their hands to partake of that ordinance, did eat and drink unworthily: which, according to St Paul, did eat and drink damnation, or rather condemnation, to themselves; not discerning the Lord's body.

Thus, if we shall pretend to be the subjects of a state, and yet despise being regulated by the government and laws of that state, we do not only thereby forfeit our right, to whatever benefits we have a right to, as being members of that state; but do also, thereby, expose, and make ourselves liable (by acting contrary thereto), of being condemned and punished by the laws of said state, for the abuse and breach thereof.

From hence, we may infer, that he who lives different from a state, in which he would wish to die, and yet takes hold of the seals of Christ's religion, conformable to the life which he requires, is a downright hypocrite; and thereby deceives himself: for hypocrisy is not only a deceit, but an abomination, to both God and man. Hence, men may indeed deceive themselves; but can never possibly deceive God—No.

From hence, he that lives not always in such a manner (at least, if he comes short to repent

and turn therefrom unto God), as to partake when he will, is nothing more than a mock-christian.

Hence, there is one thing further, ought to be attended to in this ordinance, which is; that no person, who retains the authority of Judaism (or whatever part of Moses's system, which is not of the law and religion of nature), ought to partake thereof, as appointed by Christ, till once they renounce their belief, and submit to the gospel alone. For in holding the above, *viz.* Judaism, they do thereby prohibit and forfeit their right of partaking of said ordinance. Yet, one thing ought to be considered, that such, by reason of the prejudice of education, ought, in some measure, to be indulged, like those of the Jews by the apostles, till once eradicated thereof.

There is one thing further, deserves being attended to, which is, there is no person, sect, nor party, ought to oppose another in partaking of this ordinance: I see nothing therein, to hinder such as are of good morals, in every party, to partake with those of another in said ordinance: for every one may safely partake thereof, according to his own sentiments, without being hurtful to another, though present with him, in the act of participation.

But further, be ye not, therefore, like those Judaizing teachers, who, in this ordinance, take the Jewish passover for their example: at which festival, clearances were sold out by the priests, for all manner of legal pollutions and villanies: all vices were dispensed with, for

payment (except such as were capital), for the sins of the past year.

And they, like the Jews, imagine, that by fasting and keeping up, in way of preparation for their unchristian behaviour, a stated number of holy, *viz.* fast and preaching-days, before and after participation of this ceremony, once or twice a-year, are thereby cleansed from their former pollutions; and now become deserving Christians; and can with freedom confen, without check, till the next preparation.

Hence, what waste of time, unprecedented by the apostles, slovenly, or slothfully thrown away (by virtue of superstition), without advantage to either God or man.

But, though the above are the established rules of degenerate christianity, I tell you otherwise, that except we live agreeable to what Christ has commanded (and if we come short thereof, repent, and turn unto God, and behave in such a manner), as that we could partake thereof every day, if necessary or called to it, we are not christians (though called by that name); because acting contrary to what Christ hath commanded.

Furthermore, it being therefore, as observed in the foregoing, an usual custom in ancient times, that when any great action, or striking event, took place, there was oft-times a feast constituted in commemoration thereof. Answerable to said practice, did Christ institute the ordinance of the Supper, enjoined under a command; that such as embraced his religion, should keep up the same in remem-

brance of him, who was the great author and founder thereof.

Now, since this be the case, as in the above, it is no doubt the duty of every one concerned therein, who professes his religion, to remember the celebration thereof, either in a public or private capacity: so that, if any such circumstance shall take place, as that either person or people are detained from partaking of this ordinance, because of their testifying against whatever corruptions have been ingrafted thereon by mongrel teachers, it is no doubt their duty, as observed elsewhere, to serve themselves in every particular duty, instituted and required of us by Christ in his religion.

From hence, according to what has been observed in the above, the apostles were attentive to perform the same, every first day of the week. From which, we may, therefore, justly infer, that the appointment of the Supper is what may be thought necessary to be remembered, not only in a public, but in a private capacity, if necessity requires it, on the first Sunday evening of every month; or rather once a-quarter, half, or yearly, in public. Yet to both (of which, whether public or private) ought to be given, as they see or find convenient, a discretionary power, both as to time and opportunity. And every person who may justly partake of this ordinance in public, has, in every respect, just as good a right to serve himself therewith, in private, when alone or with his family, or with others, as if

served by another when in public. But to proceed,

I know, some may indeed object, saying, this would be to profane the ordinance of the Supper, by admitting of every one, however ill-deserving, to use it at pleasure.

But in answer to said objection, perhaps ten thousand abuseth it, more by hypocritically wishing to appear like their neighbours, than one by himself, in obedience to the command. For every one who lives conformable to the gospel or will of God (and if any one shall, through inadvertency, come short thereof; sincerely repents and turns therefrom), is acceptable to God; and he that is acceptable to God, has, in every respect, as good a right, if not better, to serve himself of this, and every other ordinance, as if being served thereof by another: And also, has a better opportunity to know himself, and the behaviour of such with whom he is intimate, and those of his own family, than the priest who serves them, upon the faith of what they speak by rote.

And further, it is to be observed, that whatever speeches are made to the people, when partaking of this ordinance, ought always to consist of the duties (and rich blessings) of the gospel, in which we are taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles. And, also, ought likewise, to be aware against blending Judaism, and every other leaven of corruption, with this entertainment or gospel-feast. For it is, in every respect, as absurd (if not more), to blend any

other system therewith, when entertaining the people at the ordinance of the Supper, as to blend or intermix that which is unclean, with the external elements of the bread and wine, used by Christ's appointment in that service. As for myself, I think I could, with all manner of freedom, partake with any society, in remembrance of Christ's institution: yet, I know not if this freedom be expedient for every one, where mongrel speeches are used, or discourses of like nature made to the people, in time of their participation.

To conclude this dialogue, the night being far spent, and supper being served up, orders were given to repair to table; but the steward of his own accord, having ordered a mess to be prepared and dressed up of venison, blended with old rancid carrion, for Mr. Judaizer; and, as he began to taste and sup thereon, asked of what ingredients: who, being answered, according to the above, cried out, Good God! how ridiculous is the entertainment! but was answered, however ridiculous it may appear for a steward, in blending clean with unclean, *viz.* Asses' flesh and venison together, for the entertainment of his master's household, independent of his authority, it is, therefore, in every respect, more ridiculous still, for a priest to blend Judaism or Mosaic system with the gospel, for the entertainment of his hearers, either as in his sermons, or that of a communion-table. For to blend the gospel with Judaism, after its being utterly abolished by the apostles, and Holy Spirit bearing

witness thereto, is, if I may use the expression, a certain species of buggary; therefore, condemned of God, and cursed to men: being infamous in its nature, is to be detested by all, and respected of none.

But further, having therefore delivered my sentiments on this subject, I shall next give an advice to all different sects of christians, concerning this ordinance of the Supper, and is as follows.

The apostolic rule, which was continued for some different centuries in the primitive church, is certainly by far the best, above all others. For when they had, what they call their sacraments, it was kept with no vain show, parade, or ostentation—No; but was celebrated in one day. And also, that the whole service thereof, both took place, and ended in the space of one day, or part thereof; which, no doubt, was a preventative against the many tumults, and confusions, they are attended with among us. And it is my opinion still, that if the clergy would agree, and establish a rule for keeping this feast, throughout our nation, all on one day, it would, no doubt, be a mean not only to correct, but would even prevent many of these disorderly tumults and confusions, and other abuses that take place on many of these different occasions.

Now, if all these different denominations would but circumscribe themselves to one day of the week, *viz.* Sunday, in keeping this ordinance, in all its different services; and one

day nationally, four times a-year, or more, or whatever time they shall appoint, they would not only resemble christianity in its primitive state, but would likewise prevent many of these disorderly tumults, observed in the above, which commonly take place at many of these cabals, both in drinking, and also, in what I do not incline to mention. But if this were to be the case, as in the above, some would not only object, but even cry out, saying, what! are they going to rob us of our solemn meetings; and thereby remove and take from us our christian assemblies? And also, are they come to invert christianity, and take from us the freedom of the gospel? But what is all this out-cry! but just only the voice of those who have exchanged the usual customs of both the apostles and primitive church, for the mere traditions and commandments of fallible men. For, with such, the customs and commandments of men, are of more esteem, than all the different rules, instituted by Christ and his apostles; and closely adhered to by the primitive church. For tho' the whole of this ordinance, in the first and early ages of christianity, was both observed, and altogether consummated, in the space of one day, it is now increased, by the commandments of men, to no less than four days; and not only four, but is just verging towards a fifth: which says, that we are become more wise than the apostles, by whom christianity was first established.

Further, it is generally the case, that, when the servant becomes more knowing than his

master, or him that teacheth him, he commonly lays down new rules, both to himself and others.

The above case appears much similar to those who have moulded out other rules for christianity, than those laid down at first, by the apostles. Hence, they are just like men who fast long; but, when they come to eat, devour up all that is set before them, and oft-times die of the surfeit: so that, upon this long meal of four or five days together, they commonly fast a whole year. But to consult the safety of the constitution, is to eat often, and but little at once; which does not only strengthen the body, but likewise preserves both health, appetite, and liveliness of spirit.

What is here exprest, in the above, are the rules delivered to us by the apostles for our instruction, in the ordinance of the supper. But whatever is added thereto, by these clerical gentlemen, who imagine, that, by multiplying the above stated days of worship, like the Pharisees of old, and those of the Romish church, they become all that more acceptable in the sight of God, than others who direct themselves by the apostolic rule. But they who add to this gospel precept, as if imperfect without their addition, do thereby assume of being wiser than God, by refusing the above data, as insufficient for the standard of their obedience. And for men to add to what is there taught and set before us in the gospel, by Jesus Christ and his apostles, is altogether superfluous; therefore, can never profit us in

the sight of God: for according to the degeneracy of any church; so will the days of her stated services, in departing from the apostolic rule, be multiplied by her superstitious teachers, under a zealous pretence for the glory of God. For proof thereof, witness the Jews, *viz.* the Pharisees, who were more zealous, and pretended to a greater degree of devotion and holiness, than others. And likewise Roman catholics, *viz.* the church of Rome, who are more zealous in her reputed holydays, appointed by her teachers, than all the christian world beside. But it is a never failing maxim, that every church, in whatever degree she departs from the apostolic rule; so doth she, in return thereof, appoint holydays; which are oft-times observed with more than an uncommon show of devotion; and thereby deceive the populace, *viz.* the credulous, the ignorant, and unthinking croud. But this we may depend on, that whatever innovations are made on Christ's church (however light people may look thereon), imply the following evil, *viz.* of their being an imperfection in the gospel system, which he delivered to us: such as, that it needs to be made perfect by fallible men.

Further, and as to what they call week-day preparations, *viz.* preaching or holy days, multiplied before and after the supper, they are nothing else than a downright innovation upon Christ's church; and are no less than a representing the gospel system, delivered by Jesus Christ and his apostles, as an imperfect

or incomplete system, independent of these innovations, ingrafted thereon, as in the above, by ignorant and enthusiastic men. But one thing is visible, those clergy who presumptuously take upon themselves to add to the gospel institution, as if imperfect without their additions, are not only happy, but love to see the people tripping along, and dancing from one city or parish to another, after their harangues, in order to make themselves appear of greater importance, with the credulous, the ignorant, and unthinking croud: from whom alone, they, like Herod who was eaten up of worms, receive that most pitiful reward, *viz.* the mere empty sound of their hosannas, acclamations, or applause, saying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a man.

From hence, all such days of preparation, ingrafted on the gospel, as in the above, are nothing else, than a mere innovation upon Christ's church: for if a person be not of such a disposition or frame of life, as may justly partake thereof every day, if desire and opportunity require it, he is not fit to partake thereof at all.

But further, How, in the name of wonder, do people imagine, that any thing less than a life spent conformable to the gospel of Christ, as taught and required therein, is or will make them acceptable in the sight of God! And if (through inadvertance), upon coming short thereof, we unfeignedly repent, and turn therefrom unto God, he will graciously forgive on account thereof. But, to show and

illustrate the great hardship of getting rid of the above custom, in which people are now taught, I shall hereby delineate, by the following figure. The seed of a great tree may, with the utmost ease, be placed with one's finger into the earth; but if it shall stand therein for the space of one, two, or three centuries, it will require the assiduous labour of different days to remove it. As with the one, so does it fare with the other. Innovations, however corrupt, if once drest up, under a sanction of piety or blind devotion, are easily gone in with at first; but the longer they continue, and of people being accustomed thereto, they will be just all that more hard in being removed.

Further, there is also another, or second evil, which ought likewise to be removed, *viz.* such portions of what they call scripture, pregnant with abominable curfings, and other detestable falsehoods: for with these abominations, they approach, and pretend to worship God; believing, that these profanities (like many others), because hallowed and canonized by priests, are sacred; therefore, acceptable to him. But, to correct this disorder, all what they call psalms or hymns, used in christian assemblies, or by christians, ought to be compiled from the New Testament; such as Christ's sermon on the Mount, and other portions of like nature, contained in the gospel, concerning our duty to God, to ourselves, and our fellow creatures. For many of what they call the psalms of David, composed of Judaism,

are fitter music for the inhabitants of the lower regions, than for christians.

Hence, many of which psalms, are composed of imprecations, *viz.* cursings or anathemas, which are altogether not only contrary to the meaning, but even diametrically opposite to the very spirit of the gospel. Others again consist of the grossest falsehoods; such as the earth being founded upon the waters or floods, *viz.* what they call the great abyfs; which is no less than astonishing, that christians should be so brutishly ignorant, as to presume to worship God with such gross falsehoods, in place of truth. For to approach God with such abominable stuff, is to suppose him a God of deceit; and that he delights more in falsehood, than in truth: for heaven is no more opposite to hell, than what some of which catalogue, are to the gospel of Christ; such as are pregnant with revenge and imprecations, blessing those, who, from a savage and hellish disposition, shall dash out (against the stones) the brains of the young, the tender, the little, the innocent, and infant children. A spirit, indeed, altogether contrary to the gospel of Christ; and whatever is opposite thereto, is downright antichristian. For God can never possibly contradict, and thereby confound, or be divided against himself—No, not possible: for God is a God of harmony, a God of order, and not of confusion and disorder, like that of said catalogue—No. Now, how astonishing is it, to see men fly to the

black catalogue, *viz.* lies; and thereby address God in way of worship?

Hence, let none, therefore, imagine, that I mean the whole psalmody—No: it is only such as consist of Jewish superstition, cursings, and the like, which declare the brutish stupidity and ignorance of that people, in the knowledge of God, and of things that he has made: for there are many of which psalms, such as are free from the above, may very justly be used, either in a christian assembly, or by christians alone.

Further, we may likewise add, that, for men to pray, or wish that the wicked, or they that work iniquity, and such as the heathen nations, who are said not to know God, may be cut off, and turned into hell, is the desire and reigning principle of the devil: knowing, that if cut off in the midst of their iniquity, is to prevent their repentance, and thereby certify their damnation for ever. For instance, if David in his adultery and murder, or Solomon and Manasseh in their idolatry, or Peter in the denial of his Master, and Paul in the heat of persecution:—If the above specimens had been cut off in the midst thereof, and sent to hell, while persisting therein, it would, no doubt, have prevented their repentance, and thereby have secured their inevitable damnation for the future.—And also, if the heathen or gentile nations had been cut off and sent to hell, according to the Psalmist, and such as are of that diabolical spirit (who blessed them that dashed out the brains of infants, or inno-

cent children), where would the religion of Jesus Christ have been? It would almost, if not altogether, certainly have been extinct; because not one, if cut off and sent to hell, would have remained to bear the name thereof. For it was only the Gentiles, or heathen nations, that became christians; of whose posterity and descendants we are of. Therefore, all such hymns or psalms, of the above nature, may, with just propriety, be stiled the devil's anthems.

Hence, that the above is not the spirit of the gospel, is evident from the whole tenor thereof; which is as follows. "God is not
" willing that any should perish, but that all
" should come to repentance, that they may
" be saved and have life." What an immense difference there is betwixt the religion of Jesus Christ, and that of the Jews! Christ, in his definition thereof, tells us, Matth. v. 43, 44, 45.
" Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou
" shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine
" enemy: but I say unto you, Love your e-
" nemies, bless them that curse you, do good
" to them that hate you, and pray for them
" which despitefully use you, and persecute
" you; that ye may be the children of your
" Father which is in heaven." The difference betwixt light and darkness, heat and cold, hatred and love, is no greater than the religion of Jesus Christ, and that of the Jews, are opposite to one another. However opposite the one thereof is to the other, it is, in every

respect, all that more inconsistent to blend them together.

JUD. But, as observed elsewhere, though what you have here exprest, is nothing but the truth, I suppose there is but a few of mankind will either believe, or admit thereof.

GEN. That I will not refuse. But to illustrate what you suppose; If one should preach the gospel at Constantinople, or the protestant doctrines at Rome, would the greatest number of the former believe the gospel and become christian; or of the latter turn protestant, in virtue of what was there taught?

JUD. I apprehend, not the greatest, but the smallest for certain.

GEN. I perceive you have answered well. Hence, though only a few of the one, believe and receive the gospel, and of the other become protestant, will that prove either the gospel, or protestant religion, false, because rejected by the majority, and received only by a few individuals of both?

JUD. No, by no means.

GEN. Neither will the majority, in rejecting my sentiments, and their being only received by a few, prove that they are false—No; but will certainly evidence, that whatever opinion the world is accustomed to, though ever so false or inconsistent with the nature of God, it will (in favours thereof) be a proof against their receiving the truth.

From hence, it follows, that people of all sects, either from habit, or from prejudice of education, are blind towards themselves, in

matters of religion; and every denomination thereof, like the Pharisees of old, imagine their own sect, though ever so absurd, is more perfect than another; so that, if the religious fraud, or insufficiency thereof, shall chance to be laid open, they are greatly displeased; therefore, if once offended, they can never possibly discover their mistake, till once the blind, the fiery, and misguided zeal of their religious passion subside.

Lastly, I shall, therefore, now wind up this dialogue, with that most noble and sublime saying of Jesus Christ to the Jews, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

JUD. Hath not every person ears?

GEN. Yes: every person hath ears; but every person that hath ears, does not hear. He, therefore, that hath ears to hear, let him hear: which is, he that hath ears, open to instruction, let him hear and be instructed. But he who, through prejudice, stops his ears against hearing the truth (as the deaf adder does against the charmer), is proof against receiving it. He, therefore, that hath ears to hear, let him hear,

T H E
GOSPEL RECOVERED
FROM ITS
CAPTIVE STATE.

B O O K V.

Consisting of various Subjects.

DIALOGUE I.

On Predestination.

A FEW days ago, as we were sitting carelessly together, under the refreshing shade and boughs of a remarkable large and spreading Oak, after some little pause in discourse, Judaizer exprest himself thus. You, said he, have been, of late, so much taken up in detecting Judaism, with different other corruptions ingrafted on the gospel or Christian religion, that I now begin to think you are the only and most complete reformer, it ever yet met with.

GEN. If you really think so, said I, that I have made so much progress that way, in de-

recting the corruptions ingrafted on the gospel, you must give me leave to remind you of a claim, you lately gave me upon you, so soon as I had made a competent progress in that affair: the engaging you to proceed with me, from the consideration of exposing a false theory.

JUD. We are now alone, and you seem to be quite at leisure this afternoon; when can you have a better opportunity for that purpose than now?

GEN. You are not aware, Mr. Judaizer, of so wide a range of error and absurdity, as has been brought in, as an overflowing flood, and ingrafted upon the gospel, by Judaizers, Jesuits, and Antinomian teachers, *viz.* that of predestination, personal or particular election; and that man has no free will, and can do nothing that is good or acceptable in the sight of God; and that moral duties, such as Christ's sermon on the Mount, and others of like nature, are an abomination unto him; and that nothing else but faith and believing, are acceptable in his sight; and also, that when once confirmed therein, can never possibly fall away, miss heaven, or come short of salvation. These few are only a small specimen of many more, too tedious to mention.

The first therefore to be considered, is that extraneous and abstruse doctrine of predestination, about which, people are so much divided, in the Christian world.

From hence, I suppose there is none will refuse, that the design, wherefore God made ra-

tional creatures, was, that they might be happy: for to say, that he only made them to be miserable, this, I apprehend, is repugnant to his very nature: for he saith expressly, that he hath no pleasure or delight in the death of sinners; and also, that judgment is his strange work. From which it appears evident, of there being no personal or particular predestination; either as to life or damnation; happiness or misery. For, if God had decreed men to damnation, he could never possibly have said, that judgment was his strange work, if his predestinating them was only a mere arbitrary act of his own free will, and proceeded from no manner of obligation. And besides all this, if there had been such a thing, as that men were actually predestinated; some to life, and others to damnation; this would certainly have brought the latter under an inevitable necessity, to perform every particular act of wickedness, till their damnation was accomplished.

From this, I suppose there is none will refuse, that if God were to lay one, or more, of his creatures under a necessity to perform an action, it would not be in the power of such as were necessitated thereto, to resist. But do not such know, that, wherever necessity takes place, in doing that which is contrary to duty, the performance thereof ceaseth to be a sin: and to punish such upon account thereof, would be, in every respect, as unjust, as tho' the action had never been committed. But we know for certain, that, as man is account-

able for his actions, he was not only made, but likewise continues to be, a free agent: and because he acts from choice, and not from necessity, his punishment is no more than the just demerit of his actions. For if God had predestinated, or what we may rather say necessitated, men to the performance of either good or evil, neither reward nor punishment, could have been annexed to either sin or duty, virtue or vice: for both of which behoved, therefore, to have ceased for ever.

Hence, as to the word, predestination, some of the christian divines have, in a most visible manner, deduced most absurd and unwarrantable doctrines from it. The word, predestination, on which men are so much disagreed about its meaning, is only four times mentioned in the whole New Testament: twice in the eight chapter to the Romans; and twice in the first to the Ephesians: and in all these texts, relates expressly to the bringing the Gentiles into the christian church; and has never any other meaning, as understood by some of the greatest and best of Authors.

Further, the rock, upon which men have so much foundered, and whereon the whole mistake thereof doth rest, is, that men have united, in an undivided manner, both the foreknowledge and decree; and thereby make the decree the cause, and the effect the consequence arising from that cause. And as the decree depends upon the foreknowledge, they are undivided; but as the foreknowledge de-

pende not upon the decree, they are divided. And the reason of their being divided is, because foreknowledge is an attribute of God; but the decree is not, but only an act of his will. Now, therefore, though the decree proceeds from the foreknowledge of God, the foreknowledge thereof is by no means to be supposed the cause of the decree—No; but as all the good, and all the evil in the world, are irreconciled to the foreknowledge of God, the first and original cause of the decree, proceeds from the different consequences, *viz.* both good and evil; which is evident from St. Paul, Rom viii. 29. where he saith, that “Whom “ he did foreknow, he also did predestinate: “ and whom he did predestinate, them he also “ called.” God, from his foreknowledge, certainly foreknew, that a part of mankind would make it their duty to live agreeable to his will; and that such as did offend, and repent thereof by turning unto him, on them he would have mercy; and that such as disregarded, and lived in opposition to his will, both in life, and to death, he decreed, that they should be miserable.

From hence, it follows, that the decree depends, altogether, upon the state in which each thereof lives and dies. As God perfectly foreknew all such as would comply with his will, them he decreed to everlasting life; and whom he did predestinate thereto, them he also called, unto the rich blessings and benefits of the gospel of Christ. The cause, therefore, of our being either good or bad, does not a-

rise from predestination, nor any consequence thereof, but from good and evil, virtue and vice; which is the original cause, from whence predestination takes place.

It is, therefore, now evident, that God decrees none of mankind to either virtue or vice; but only, that they who are good shall be happy, and the other miserable.

From hence, God has, therefore, decreed, that virtue shall be rewarded, and vice, unrepented of, shall be punished.

But the above text, when perverted thus (of numbers of the human race being predestinated; and thereby inevitably decreed of God to eternal damnation, without mercy, before he so much as gave them a being; not from any actions of which they were guilty, or had done in giving offence, but from mere caprice), is a most damnable doctrine. For this, and every other doctrine, of like nature, tending to make mankind miserable, by virtue of which, thousands of weak minds, to get rid of a hell, kindled and set on fire by those despicable wretches (by whom it was propagated, independent of God), have been tormented, and thereby driven into despair, is damnable.

From hence, the propagators and patronizers of which, are incomparably worse than devils, by troubling and tormenting, weak and innocent minds, not only independent, but even contrary to the will and command of God. The first inventor of this doctrine, with that of personal and particular election, reprobation, and different others of like nature,

much a-kin to itself, and from whom they derived their birth, was one Augustin, priest of Hippo, afterwards elected bishop thereof: out of whose ashes has arisen such swarms of metaphysical quibblers, enough to bring the best religion under heaven (the gospel not excepted), to perpetual disgrace. The consequence of which, has not only tended to the dishonour of God, but has driven thousands of weak minds (as observed) into despair.

Further, if men were laid under a decree, they could have no freedom of will; and if they had no freedom of will, they would be incapable of either virtue or vice: and the being decreed to whatever action, whether of good or evil, they could never therefore be rewarded, or yet be culpable; nor punished for the action; but only he, by whom they were necessitated to the performance thereof. And the reason why; because they acted not from choice, but from necessity; therefore, altogether incapable to resist the fulfilling that which was laid upon them: for if man was not a free agent, but was necessitated either to good or evil, this would remove the cause of both happiness and misery; and as the cause thereof being removed, he could neither be happy nor miserable. For the cause of both happiness and misery, proceeds from a freedom of will. For the punishment of the mind is only this; because it was entirely in its power to have done or acted otherwise. But the want of power, in the action, gives no place to punishment: for if men were decreed, either to good

or evil, this would destroy and annihilate the cause, whether of happiness or misery: for necessity puts an end to both.

Hence, it, therefore, now appears evident, that predestination is by no means the cause of either good or evil: but good and evil, is the sole cause, why God doth predestinate some to a state of happiness, as the reward of their complying with his will, and others to a state of misery, for acting contrary, or without respect thereunto; and is obvious from what has been exprest by St. Paul, already taken notice of in the above; that predestination proceeds only from a foreknowledge of actions; and that the decree is no cause of these actions, either as towards their good or evil.

But further, if man was predestinated to damnation, before he so much as had an existence, this, for certain, behoved to be the will of God; and if man acts only in such a channel, as to accomplish and bring to pass the decree or will of God, he is only acting in obedience to the decree. And if God punishes men for acting in obedience to his will, how comes it to pass, that God punishes men for acting in disobedience, or contrary, to his will? A strange doctrine indeed! But more strange still, of its being either believed, or yet received by rational beings! That God will punish men, for acting in obedience to his will, and that men are to receive his approbation, favour, and esteem, for acting in disobedience thereto, is so palpably gross, that,

I apprehend, it is what God will never possibly dispense with.

Thus far have they confounded the foreknowledge and decrees of God, in blending them together, as inseparable from each other; affirming, that if God has a foreknowledge, whatever comes to pass must, therefore, inevitably be the result of his decrees:—And through which assertion, do thereby make the decree, though nothing more than an action of his will, equal to his omniscience, from whence his foreknowledge proceeds. As omniscience being a moral attribute of God, they make the decree, though nothing more than an action of the divine will, an additional attribute, to those of which he is possessor. But this, for certain, is what can never be the case: for the decree proceeds only from the foreknowledge, and not the foreknowledge from the decree. Foreknowledge being, therefore, an innate quality or perfection of God, is therefore inseparable from him. Whereas, the decree being nothing more than an action of the divine will, arising from his foreknowledge, must, of necessity, depend on the foreknowledge; and not the foreknowledge on the decree.

From hence, it follows, God hath therefore decreed, that virtue shall be rewarded, and vice punished.

JUD. But I am sure we are taught otherwise in our catechisms (by the systematical doctors); which is, that “The decrees of God, are his
“ eternal purpose, according to the counsel

“ of his own will, whereby he hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.”

GEN. If such a thing were true, as, that God hath fore-ordained every thing that comes to pass, this would inevitably constitute him the author of all the sins in the universe; yea, the most enormous thereof, not excepted.— And the reason why; because the sinner would be nothing more than a mere tool or instrument, in the hand of him that commanded, or was prepared by his absolute power, for to perform and bring to pass the action, which he himself had pre-determined, was to complete their damnation.

JUD. But we are told further, by the systematical doctors, concerning the decrees of God; that numbers of mankind are reprobated therein to eternal damnation.

GEN. Of God's having, from all eternity, reprobated one, more, or whatever number of the human race, by an unalterable decree, to inevitable damnation, I shall consider as follows.

If a person should betroth a virgin, and marry a wife, in order to beget children with her: and if this should be the design of him that marries the woman, only to beget a certain number of children with her; and before any of which children were begot by him, a certain number thereof, one half, two thirds, or more of which, he determined to beget on no other purpose, but to torment them while alive, so long as in his power to keep them in being? Now, what ideas could you form of

such a father, who begot these children, for no other purpose, than to torment them perpetually, as in the above?

JUD. He, for certain, could be supposed not only a tyrant, but one of the very worst of beings.

GEN. According as in the above, have all such represented the just and true God, in making creatures on no other purpose, than to afflict and torment them for ever. Now, is it possible, for one to form a worse, or more unbecoming idea of any being whatever? No, certainly not.

Hence, do not such, therefore (who propagate and patronise the aforesaid doctrine, of God having, from an arbitrary act of his will, reprobated a certain number of the human race to eternal damnation, before they so much as received their beings from him), know of what they are guilty; even no less, than of making God contradict, and thereby confound himself, in that where he saith expressly, Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure, nor delight, in the death of the wicked (*viz.* sinners); but that the wicked turn from his evil way and live: Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" See also, Isa. lv. 7. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Now, therefore,

is it possible, according to the above, that if God formed such numbers of mankind, for nothing else than for eternal damnation, that he would have said, That he had no pleasure nor delight in the death of sinners? No, certainly not.

Further, and to conclude this dialogue, there is one thing, I cannot but observe, which deserves our particular notice, and is as follows.

How often have I heard the clergy, and such as they, who are patrons for the above doctrine, proclaiming aloud; how that God passed by the angels that kept not their first estate, and shewed mercy, in granting deliverance to the human race, after they were become sinners.

From hence, it is therefore evident, that these angels, who sinned and fell from their original purity, were created in a probationary state; and as each thereof being possess'd of a freedom of will; and had it in their power either to stand or fall, their damnation was only of themselves. But, if what they call predestination, particular election, reprobation, and the like, were true, not a few, but a great part of mankind, whose state was pre-determined, would have been infinitely worse, than those of the fallen angels, which they call devils; for the fallen angels were created probationers. But, according to the above doctrines mentioned, with that of original sin, the whole human race, exclusive of Adam, were altogether entirely cut short of any such privileges,

long before they so much as had an existence. And not only this, but a great part of said race, would, by reason of Adam's first sin, independent of their own, have been confirmed in their damnation, by virtue of an unalterable decree, past against them, which they themselves could by no means either foresee or prevent.

From hence, the cause of their damnation, could, therefore, in no respect, be imputed to themselves—No; but only to him that gave them a being: which would be nothing less, than downright blasphemy. A doctrine, indeed, more fit for being taught by devils, than men! the reason why; because it thereby represents God, as having created rational beings, for no other purpose, than to be miserable; by preventing their liberty in performing such duties, as required by him, essential to their everlasting happiness, both for this world, and that which is to come.

JUD. But, if the actions and state of men are not decreed, from whence, then, comes the origin of moral evil?

GEN. The origin of evil comes by permission: for without God had permitted evil, there could have been no probationary state: and without a probationary state, there could, as exprest in the foregoing, have been neither rewards nor punishments, annexed to the actions of men, or yet angels: such as, to encourage them to virtue, and deter them from vice. But to proceed, I shall add as follows.

If every person's state was pre-determined,

according to the fatality, or predestinarian scheme, each thereof, would be born, not to be judged according to their procedure in life. —No; but only on purpose to receive the sentence past thereon, before they received their existence. But if this were the case, that men were decreed, as in the above, and thereby destined to eternal damnation, before they received their existence, How comes it to pass, that God (as exprest in the foregoing), has no delight in the death of sinners? And also, as exprest under the gospel by St. John, “That “God is love,” as he certainly is, could such as are decreed, according to said doctrine, say, in truth, that God was love? No, certainly not: for if such a doctrine were true, as exprest by you, Destenarians, all these texts must, of necessity, go for naught, as false, and of no foundation; but let God be true, and Predestinarians liars.

But further, when it is said, that God passed by the angels that kept not their first estate; if such a thing had been the case, as that they never inhabited corporeal bodies, their spiritual powers having, therefore, never been subjected to dwell with animal nature, their sin behoved to arise from choice, and not from temptation and example; as we who are of such a compound nature, partaking of two different qualities, *viz.* body and spirit, whose rational powers being so nearly connected and related to the animal, are thereby insnared, through the different temptations, to which

the over-ruling passions of animal nature, are exposed. This being the state wherein men were created, God, in his justice, upon an unfeigned repentance for their sin, has granted forgiveness to each thereof, as an inseparable reward annexed thereto, by his justice and goodness. But if angels were never classed with animal nature, nor connected with the powers thereof, they could never possibly be subjected to the different temptations, arising therefrom, to which they are thereby exposed.

Hence, therefore, as they sinning from choice, and not being subject to temptation, Justice, from the position in which they stood, was under no manner of obligation to grant them, either repentance or forgiveness, as there being no room left for them to look for it.

Lastly, as observed by a certain author upon this subject, "This horrible doctrine of predestination, is not only injurious to the character of the blessed God, but is an express insult, not only upon his goodness alone, but even also, upon the whole of his moral attributes; and, therefore, repugnant to the whole gospel scheme.

"Hence, is there one single passage (concerning the terms and conditions of mens final acceptance), in the gospel of Christ, that asserts, or even obscurely intimates, that men, at the judgment day, will be saved, in consequence of God's decree of election, or condemned in consequence of a divine pre-ordination? No,

there is not. Does not the gospel of Christ, universally, declare, in the plainest and most express terms, that all mankind will be judged, according to their works? That the decisive sentence will be regulated, solely, by the deeds done in the body? That whatever man sows in this life, he shall assuredly reap in the next? That we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ; and every one receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad? That if we do good, we shall be accepted; and if we do evil, sin lieth at our own door? That God is no respecter of persons; hath no favourites among his children; but is the impartial, righteous, and benevolent parent, benefactor, and governor of the whole world? For that, in every nation, whether Christian, Mahometan, Popish, or Pagan, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him."

But to conclude this subject; God hath, no doubt, as has been remarked, decreed (or what they call predestinated), that sin shall be punished; and also the sinner, without an unfeigned repentance (for the evil committed), and turning therefrom unto God. And, on the other hand, that whoever shall live in obedience to his will, conformable to the gospel of Christ, shall therefore be happy, and enjoy him for ever, without intermission.

DIALOGUE II.

Of Election.

GEN. **T**HE next, or second subject, to be considered, is the abstruse, or rather absurd and unintelligible, doctrine of election; which, though near a-kin to our last, requires to be handled by itself, and is as follows.

As this subject, like the other, has been much controverted, I shall, therefore, lay the same before you, as received by our systematical doctors; which is, of there being only a few, or particular number of mankind, elected to salvation; and the rest thereof, to inevitable damnation, without mercy, for ever.

Some of the capital texts, from which they derive the authority of this doctrine, are in John xvii. where Christ there speaks concerning his disciples, and to none other. Verses 6, 7, 8, 9. “ I have manifested thy name unto the
“ men which thou gavest me out of the world :
“ thine they were, and thou gavest them me,
“ and they have kept thy word. Now they (*viz.*
“ the disciples) have known that all things,
“ whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee.
“ For I have given unto them the words which
“ thou gavest me; and they have received
“ them, and have known surely that I came
“ out from thee, and they have believed that
“ thou didst send me. I pray for them (*viz.*

“ the disciples) : I pray not for the world, but
“ for them which thou hast given me ; for
“ they are thine.” When Christ saith, that
he prays not for the world ; he prays not that
God should save or accept of a world, lying in
wickedness, or wallowing in iniquity, whose
desire is to fulfil the will of the flesh. For
Christ came not to save a people in their sins,
but from their sins. And in verse 20. “ Nei-
“ ther pray I for these alone, but for them al-
“ so which shall believe on me through their
“ word.” But from the sixth verse down to
the end of said chapter, save only in the
twentieth, is altogether exprest concerning his
disciples. These, I know, with different other
texts, have been made an handle of, by such
as are propagators and patrons of this chime-
rical doctrine, of a certain number being e-
lected by God to salvation ; and of all the rest
being not only left, but reprobated, without
mercy, to eternal damnation. And what is
all this, when done, but only a taking the
advantage of the ignorant, in wresting the said
texts, in order to prove their own hypothesis ;
and thereby make a prey of the credulous and
unthinking croud. But to proceed,

With respect to the doctrine of election,
there is one thing necessary to be observed ;
that what is here exprest by the apostle, in his
reasoning upon this subject, is only to the
Jews alone (who, from prejudice, had reject-
ed the gospel, though first offered to them),
independent of the Gentiles ; which proves it-
self from the words of both text and context,

which are wholly adapted to the phraseology of that people; who, by their priests, were made to believe, that they, above all others, were the only favourite people of God; therefore, of more esteem than the whole human world beside. On which account, they confidently took to themselves the following titles, *viz.* his called and chosen people; his beloved and select people; and also his elect and peculiar people. But these terms, of which we may be fully assured, were only claimed and expressed by themselves, *viz.* their priests, independent of God, and not by him. For is it possible that God made choice of a nation of thieves, devoted to arrant villany; and who not only lived therein, but died in what they practised? No, not possible.

And further, I shall only touch a little, upon a few of these texts, to shew the absurd falsehood of this doctrine. For which, see Rom. xiv. 15. "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy him not with thy meat, for whom Christ died." And also, 1 Cor. viii. 11. "And through thy knowledge, shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" Now, if Christ died only for a certain number, according to the electarian doctrine, why is it said, that he died for them who were liable to be destroyed, or made to perish, by a stumbling-block being laid in their way? See also, 1 Tim. ii. 4. "Who will have all men (without exception) to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge

“ of the truth.” Verse 6. “ Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” It has been proved elsewhere, from several different texts, by a certain author, that the word, which we render redemption, or redeeming, from whence the Greek word, which we translate, ransom, is derived, does not necessarily imply a ransom, or consideration, paid to them that hold any one in bondage, but only a deliverance from such a state, into a state of liberty. There are above fifty instances, in the Old Testament, where the word, ransom, is used for, deliver, without any price or ransom paid. When it is said, that Christ gave his life, or himself, to be a ransom for all; this implies no more, than, that he died to deliver man from the effect of sin; that it cost him his life; not that he paid his life to sin, or to God, to ransom mankind from sin, but to bring about their deliverance: that was the ransom he gave, or is meant under said term. See also, Chap. iv. 10. “ For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.”

Hence, we see here, that by the doctrines, Jesus Christ brought from God, with those which the apostles taught in his name, he was the Saviour of all men; but more especially, to those that would accept thereof. See likewise, 2 Pet. ii. 1. “ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there

“ shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

Further, we see from said text, with different others, which fully prove, that those may perish for whom Christ died. Add to those of the above, 2 Pet. ii. 18. Mat. xiii. 12. Heb. vi. 4. & x. 29. And also, 2 Pet. iii. 9. “ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” St. Peter does not say, that God would have none of the elect to perish; but would have all of them to be saved. But it is exprest, both negatively and positively, and in the most general terms, concerning all mankind, that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And we may depend upon it, that God is both sincere and earnest.

Hence, there is another particular text worth consideration, and upon which they lay no small stress, in proof of personal election; for which, see Rom. ix. 21. “ Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour.” For the better understanding of which text, see Jer. xviii. 1, 2, 3, 4. to which the apostle refers, “ The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause thee to hear

“ my words. Then I went down to the pot-
“ ter’s house, and, behold, he (*viz.* the pot-
“ ter) wrought a work on the wheels. And
“ the vessel that he made of clay was marred
“ in the hand of the potter; so he made it a-
“ gain another vessel, as seemed good to the
“ potter to make it.

It is to be observed, that before the potter begins his work, he first prepares his clay, for whatever number or kind of vessels he intends to make thereof. And if any of said vessels shall chance to be marred upon the wheels, the clay thereof is thrown aside, in order to be prepared with what he intends for making another kind of vessels. Now, it is strictly to be observed, that this potter never intended to make another kind of vessels of the said clay, till once it was marred upon the wheels; neither does God intend to make either person, people, or nation, to dishonour, till once they dishonour themselves, through their own wickedness, by sinning against him. Hence, neither did God attempt to punish the Jewish nation, or yet send them to captivity in Babylon, till once they had disgraced themselves, by reason of their gross idolatry, and other sins, of which they were guilty.

The above is no more, than what may be clearly understood, from what follows, Jer. xviii. 5,—10. “ Then the word of the Lord
“ came to me, saying, O house of Israel, can-
“ not I do with you as this potter? saith the
“ Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s
“ hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of

“ Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it. If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant it. If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.” But to proceed,

Hence, in tracing out the apostle’s reference, this great bulwark of personal election, immediately disappears; and shews itself conditional, in the salvation of sinners. For in whatever way God deals with either a person, a people, or nation, either as to good or evil, building up or pulling down, the result thereof is conditional.

The above texts may suffice to shew, in what manner the apostle’s meaning has been perverted, by ignorant, self-interested, and designing men; who, for the sake of their own favourite system, would rather that truth be sacrificed, than one of their beloved nostrums should fall into disrepute.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that, when express by Jeremiah of the potter’s vessel being marred upon the wheels, he therefore made it another vessel, the meaning thereof is; when the Jews became wicked, through their idolatry and other vices, God therefore sent them to Baby-

lon, in order to punish them for their iniquities ; and being convinced of the evil thereof, they repented, and became a new vessel, by turning unto God. For it was only by destroying themselves, through the guilt and pollution of sin, whereby that people are represented, under the similitude of a vessel marred upon the wheels. And it is only by virtue of repentance, amendment of life, and turning unto God, whereby they were renewed, and became vessels of favour.

Hence, it must therefore, as applied by the apostle, be understood in the same light, to respect nations, and not particular persons. Honour and disgrace in this world ; not eternal happiness and misery in the world to come. It is, therefore, now evident, how greatly they err, who understand it, as respecting eternal happiness and misery in a future state.

But to proceed, After all that has been expressed, there is yet another capital anchor, upon which, the patrons for a particular or personal election, lay very much stress ; and is what hath been expressed by the prophet Jeremiah, Chap. iii. 14. " Turn, O backsliding
" children, saith the Lord ; for I am married
" unto you ; and I will take one of a city, and
" two of a nation, and I will bring you to
" Zion." But this text, like others on whom they lay so much stress, makes nothing in their favours when properly understood : for the above was at a time when the Jews were fallen into the grossest idolatry ; upon which account, they were sent into captivity in Ba-

bylon, where they were to remain, as a punishment for their iniquities, till there was nothing but a few of that generation left to return thither. The above is all that is meant, by taking one of a city or tribe, and two of a family. It being, therefore, evident, from the above text, where it saith, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you."

From hence, it follows, that such as were born under the captivity, whether bred up idolaters, or worshippers of the true God, and continuing therein, could never possibly be said to backslide, or to have departed therefrom.

Further, when it is said, "I will take one of a city, and two of a family;" this meant only the few that remained, and were not taken away by death; during the seventy years captivity. "And I will bring you to Zion." And will bring you again to your own land, where you were born, and from whence you were taken, because of your iniquities. For proof of this being all that is literally meant by these words, I will take one of a city, and two of a family, and will bring you to Zion, see Ezra iii. 12. where it is said, "But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, before their being carried to Babylon, when the foundation of this house, or second temple, was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice (while others shouted aloud for joy);" because the

glory thereof appeared altogether short of the former house.

From this, it is now evident, that these men who wept, when the foundation thereof was laid, were of the residue of that generation, that was born and carried away for their idolatry; who, by living out the seventy years captivity, had opportunity to return, not only from their iniquities, but likewise from Babylon, unto their own land (from whence they were driven), there to possess, with freedom, the worship and enjoyment of their God in Zion. The words of said text may, no doubt, be spiritualized, or applied otherwise; but this is all that is meant in the strict or literal sense, of what is contained therein; which is evident, not only from verse 12, but likewise verse 18, of Jer. iii. "In those days the house
" of Judah, shall walk with the house of Israel,
" and they shall come together out of the land
" of the north, to the land that I have given
" for an inheritance unto your fathers." The 18th verse proves the meaning of the 12th, in every respect, as clear as words can possibly make it.

JUD. I do, therefore, not only acquiesce, but heartily submit to the justness of the above.

GEN. I desire no person to agree therewith, but from a knowledge of its being conformable to truth.

JUD. That, I heartily believe; but though I am satisfied with the former, there is yet another passage in Rom. ix. if not decisive, ap-

pears much in favour of personal or particular election ; and is as follows, ver. 11, 12. “ For
“ the children being not yet born, neither hav-
“ ing done any good or evil, that the purpose
“ of God, according to election, might stand,
“ not of works, but of him that calleth ; it
“ was said unto her, The elder shall serve the
“ younger.” The children being not yet
born, neither having done good or evil, that
the purpose of God, according to election,
might stand ; in order to show, that the pre-
ferring of one to another, depends solely upon
God’s will, it was said unto her (according as
reported), by a divine oracle, The elder shall
serve the younger.

GEN. The principal article that requires to
be settled, in this chapter, is, what kind of
election and reprobation, the apostle is arguing
about ; whether of election, by an absolute
decree and purpose of God, to eternal life ; and
reprobation, by a like absolute decree, to eter-
nal misery : or only election to the present
privileges, and external advantages of the
kingdom of God, in this world ; and repro-
bation or rejection, as it signifies, the not be-
ing favoured with those privileges and advan-
tages : it seems demonstrably clear, that it is
the latter election and rejection, the apostle is
discouraging upon, and not the former. Agree-
able to the purpose of God, according to elec-
tion, it was said unto Rebecca, The elder shall
serve the younger. For, Gen. xxv. 23. “ The
“ Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy
“ womb, and two manner of people shall be

“ separated from thy bowels: and the one
“ people shall be stronger than the other peo-
“ ple; and the elder shall serve the younger.”
These are the words which signify the purpose
of God, according to election; therefore, the
election refers to Jacob’s posterity, or the whole
nation of Israel. But all the nation of Israel,
were not absolutely elected to eternal life; there-
fore, the election spoken of here, cannot be
election to eternal life. Agreeable to the pur-
pose of God, according to election, it was
said to Rebecca, The elder shall serve the
younger; but to serve, in scripture, never
signifies to be eternally damned in the world
to come. Consequently, the opposite blessing,
bestowed upon the posterity of the younger,
could not be eternal salvation, but some pri-
vileges in this life; therefore, the purpose, ac-
cording to election, refers to such privileges.

Hence, it being certain, that these words
(The elder shall serve the younger), are al-
luded by St. Paul, in the same sense that they
are used in Gen. xxv. 23. that they must here
be understood, not of the persons of Esau and
Jacob themselves, but of their posterity: for
these are the words of the supposed oracle;
“ Two nations are in thy womb, and two
“ manner of people shall be separated from
“ thy bowels: and the one shall be stronger
“ than the other, and the greater shall serve
“ the less.” Therefore, in this passage of St.
Paul, the phrase ought not to have been ren-
dered, The elder shall serve the younger; but,
the greater shall serve the less. And so the

apostle's scope also requires, who manifestly speaks of the election, not of particular persons, but of whole nations.

JUD. See likewise, Rom. ix. 13. "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

GEN. Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated; are to be taken in a national sense: for the preference, God gave to the posterity of one of them to be his people, and possess the land of promise (a fine plentiful pleasant country), before the other, that it was not meant of the persons of Esau and Jacob, is beyond doubt; because it was not true of them, as Esau personally was always greater and more prosperous than Jacob, who bowed down before him to the ground, seven times, when he met; as we read, Gen. xxxiii. 3. "And called him his Lord," ver. 8. But in times following, the posterity of Jacob were settled in the land of Canaan; a land flowing with milk and honey; the glory of all lands; whereas the posterity of Esau, were settled in a barren desert land, which gave occasion to the words of the prophet Malachi, from whence the apostle makes this quotation. The apostle's meaning, therefore, is no more here, than that God acts according to his sovereign will (but that, we know, is always guided by sovereign wisdom), in choosing one nation (not particular persons), before another, to distinguish them by his blessings, and give them greater light and knowledge than another. For, in scripture language, the word,

hated, when it is used (as it often is) comparatively, signifies only to postpone, in our esteem or kindness, to have a less regard for; therefore, is by no means to be understood in such a sense, as to imply either personal election, or reprobation.

Hence, in pursuing of this subject, one thing further, deserves our particular notice. (Mark this). The Electarians, like those of every other delusion, in quoting scripture, are always sure to avoid the context; lest they should bewray their cause, and thereby confound themselves, in what they have advanced. For instance, I have known some of these Electarian gentlemen, who, in order to keep their deluded votaries in the dark, pick out as follows, Gen. iv. 4, 5. "And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering, he had not respect." But in citing the above (Mark this), were sure to avoid the two following verses, which expressly detect the subtil reasoning of the deceiver: which is, "And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."

The above is nothing more than a mere specimen, in what manner the Electarian gentlemen, their constituents, and others of like nature, quote scripture, in deceiving the people, by concealing the truth. For what is here exprest to Cain, in the first clause of the 7th verse, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be

“accepted? and, if thou doest not well, sin
“lieth at the door,” is just, in every respect,
as conditional, as that which is said to have
been exprest to Adam in paradise.

JUD. Though you appear to have the better
of me, by your explaining away the word,
hated, in the above text, I expect to be able to
recover the meaning thereof in another; for
which, see Luke xiv. 26. “If any man come
“to me, and hate not his father, and mother,
“and wife, and children, and brethren, and
“sisters; yea, and his own life also, he can-
“not be my disciple.”

GEN. In answer to this passage, to which
you refer, in order to recover your loss, it will,
as I apprehend, make nothing to your advan-
tage. For to hate our parents is impious; and
to hate ourselves is impossible; and that we
are not to hate our wives, see Eph. v. 25.
“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ
“also loved the church, and gave himself for
“it.” Ver. 28, 29. “So ought men to love
“their wives, as their own bodies: he that
“loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man
“ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth
“and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the
“church:” And to hate children is impossible;
for such would be worse than monsters. And
as to hate brethren or sisters, see 1 John ii. 9.
“He that saith he is in the light, and hateth
“his brother, is in darkness even until now.”
See also, Chap. iii. 15. “Whosoever hateth his
“brother, is a murderer: and ye know, that
“no murderer hath eternal life abiding in

“ him.” Chap. iv. 20. “ If a man say, I love
“ God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar;
“ for he that loveth not his brother whom he
“ hath seen, how can he love God whom he
“ hath not seen?”

It is, therefore, now evident, from the above texts, that what is there exprest by Luke, who wrote only upon hearsay, or at second hand, is not to be depended upon for truth, in that wherein he hath exprest himself, saying, “ If any man come to me, and hate not his
“ father, and mother, and wife, and children,
“ and brethren, and sisters; yea, and his own
“ life also, he cannot be my disciple,” is grossly absurd, and of the worst of consequences. For it does not only confound the gospel, but many also, who, from a weak, superstitious, and enthusiastic disposition, imagine that they have authority from said text, to hate and persecute all such, whether father, mother, children, sister, or brother, that differ from them in sentiment or opinion. Nor is this all—No, it is not: for which, see Matth. v. 17. “ Think
“ not that I am come to destroy the law or the
“ prophets,” viz. the law of reason or religion of nature; “ I am not come to destroy, but to
“ fulfil.” See likewise verse 19. “ Whosoever,
“ therefore, shall break one of these command-
“ ments, and shall teach men so, he shall be
“ called least in the kingdom of heaven: but
“ whosoever shall do and teach them, the same
“ shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Hence, if Christ, as exprest by Luke (who

wrote upon hearſay, or at ſecond hand), had taught men to hate father, mother, children, ſiſter, and brother, contrary to the goſpel, he had not only contradicted himſelf, but would thereby, in teaching men to break the law or commandment, in laying them under an obligation to do ſo, or they could not be his diſciples, would thereby have made himſelf to become leaſt in the kingdom of heaven. But the contrary doctrine, to Luke, is not only taught, but moſt ſtrenuouſly inculcated, both by Chriſt and his apoſtles. Thus Luke, as in the above, may teach us what an immense difference there is, betwixt thoſe who write upon hearſay, or at ſecond hand, and they who are preſent. The text here expreſt by Luke, “ If any man come to me, and hate not
“ his father, and mother, and wife, and chil-
“ dren, and brethren, and ſiſters, and his own
“ life alſo, he cannot be my diſciple,” when expreſt by Matthew, who was both an ear and eye-witneſs, and therefore wrote at firſt hand; for which, ſee Chap. x. 37. “ He that loveth
“ father or mother, more than me, is not
“ worthy of me; and he that loveth ſon or
“ daughter, more than me, is not worthy of
“ me.” What is here expreſt by Matthew, is far from bearing the ſmalleſt alluſion to that which is expreſt by Luke. For Chriſt, according to Matthew, who was an ear and eye-witneſs, requires no higher degree of love from us, than what is due to thoſe of our near relations; ſuch as our father, our mother, our wife, our children, our ſiſter, and brother; but all of

these are to be hated, according to Luke, who writes upon hearsay, or at second hand, before we can be admitted, or accepted of him.

A further disadvantage of Luke's writing upon hearsay, is evident from the case of the lawyer, who is said to have asked Christ a question, in way of tempting him. Both Matthew, and also Mark, who also writes at second hand, says, that Christ answered him, *viz.* the lawyer; but according to Luke, it is the lawyer that answers Christ; for which, see Mat. xxii. 35,—40. "Then one of them which
" was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempt-
" ing him, and saying, Master, which is the
" great commandment in the law? Jesus an-
" swered him, thou shalt love the Lord thy
" God with all thy heart, and with all thy
" soul, and with all thy mind. This is the
" first and great commandment. And the se-
" cond is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy
" neighbour as thyself. On these two com-
" mandments," which is comprehended in the
law and religion of nature, "hang all the law
" and the prophets." Mark, though not al-
together, is nearly the same as in the above;
but Luke is as follows, Chap. x. 25, 26, 27, 28.
"And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and
" tempted him, saying, Master, What shall I
" do to inherit eternal life? He (*viz.* Jesus)
" said unto him, What is written in the law?
" How readest thou? And he (*viz.* the law-
" yer) said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
" with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,
" and with all thy strength, and with all thy

“ mind, and thy neighbour as thyself. And
“ he (*viz.* Christ) said unto him, Thou hast
“ answered right: this do, and thou shalt
“ live.”

What is here so variously exprest by Matthew and Luke, may, therefore, teach us, what an immense difference there is betwixt one who is an evidence, ear and eye-witness, and one who writes only upon information. For instance, let a literal fact be related or told by twenty different persons, one after another, it will be liable in being transmuted into as many different shapes.

The above is an incontestible proof, of those who wrote the scripture, of their being just, in every respect, as liable to mistake, and fallible, as other men.

Further, and to proceed, Mark and Luke, who wrote upon the credit of hearsay, both of which tell us, that the women, *viz.* the two Marys, brought sweet spices early in the morning, first day of the week, in order that they might anoint the body of Jesus. Mark says, they bought them, and Luke says, they prepared them. But John, one of the disciples, who wrote at first hand, tells us, that Nicodemus brought the spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight: and he, with others, took down the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Hence, there cannot possibly be two more contrary accounts, than what is here delivered, by these different writers. For Mark and

Luke, who wrote on hearsay, or at second hand, say, that the spices were brought by the women in the morning of the resurrection, in order to anoint the body of Jesus; and John, who wrote at first hand, says, that Nicodemus brought them in the evening of the crucifixion, and wound them up with the linen clothes, along with the body, before his being interred in the sepulchre.

JUD. But the women may have prepared the spices, from an ignorance of their having been prepared by Nicodemus, and of his being buried therewith.

GEN. That can never be; for both Mark and Luke say, that the women beheld where he was laid: for Luke tells us expressly, they followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid: and we have it certified by John, that they attended as spectators, in time of his crucifixion; therefore, no doubt, continued their attention till he was interred in the sepulchre. But another seeming contradiction appears to take place, Matthew, but more especially Mark, tells us, that the women stood afar off; but John tells us, they stood by the cross: whom, when Jesus saw, he talked with them, and said unto his mother, woman, behold thy Son. They, therefore, when present in time of his body being taken down from the cross, wound up and laid in the sepulchre, behoved to be altogether sensible of Nicodemus's preparation, and of his being buried therewith. And John speaks not one word, either of the women preparing the spices, or

of their bringing them along with them to the grave, on the morning of the resurrection. No, he does not give the smallest hint thereof.

Hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that east and west, north and south, are no greater opposites, than what these different accounts are to one another. And fire is no more opposite to frost, than what contradiction is to infallibility. For it is, in every respect, just as possible for light to dwell with darkness, or darkness with light, as it is possible for contradiction and infallibility, to dwell together. And it is likewise further evident, that such palpable contradictions, can never possibly be wrote under the direction of infallibility—No, not possible.

But further, see also, the account given of the centurion concerning his servant. Matthew says, that he came to Jesus himself; but Luke tells us, he only sent to him, that he might come and heal his servant. Nor is this all—No: for not only Matthew, but even both Mark and Luke, say, that when Jesus was led away to be crucified, they compelled one Simon to bear his cross; but John tells us, that Christ bare it himself. But, though both Christ and Simon should have been employed therein, this tells us expressly, that none thereof wrote under infallibility—No: for, tho' the gospel, taught by Jesus Christ, be from God, as it certainly is, these, with others of like nature, are an incontestible evidence, of the fallibility of those by whom it was wrote and conveyed to us.

Hence, what a glorious system would the gospel have been, if it had been wrote, or conveyed to us, as it dropped from the lips or mouth of its great and illustrious Author? But this, we see, it did not: for no contradiction was in him—No: for he taught as never man taught, the pure and unfullied laws of God, free from all manner of contradiction; but conveyed to us by fallible men.

JUD. Being, therefore, now convinced, from what you have exprest in the foregoing, on this passage, to which I referred you, in Luke, I therefore heartily acknowledge of being misled, in the meaning, to which they have applied the above text. But there is one thing more on which they lay some particular stress. The text is in Matth. ix. 13. “I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

GEN. I know that they, in order to explain away the meaning of this text, that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, do thereby circumscribe this call (though unlimited to sinners) to a certain number, which they commonly style his elect. But if such a thing, as that God had personally elected a certain number of his creatures to either heaven or hell, as asserted by the Electarian doctors, and such as are advocates for personal election, why then does the prophet express himself thus, saying, “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no delight in the death of sinners; but would rather that the wicked turn

“ from his evil way and live : and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return
“ unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” And also, the apostle Peter, Acts x. 34, 35. “ Then Peter opened his
“ mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that
“ God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh
“ righteousness, is accepted of him.” Now, in what a light is this to represent God, as being, in every respect, as partial as themselves; when he has declared in the above, in contradistinction thereto, that he hath no delight in the death of sinners: and also in the latter, that he hath no respect of persons: whereas, if such a thing, as personal or particular election, were true, all these texts behoved to go for naught. For the doctrine of personal or particular election, implies not only a simple, but the very highest degree of partiality. To the above, I shall add as follows, Rom. ii. 11. “ For there is no respect of persons with
“ God.” And also, 2 Pet. iii. 9. “ The
“ Lord is not willing that any should perish,
“ but that all should come to repentance.” Now, is it possible, that words can be more express than what the above are, against personal or particular election?—No, not possible. The above is only a specimen of the many more, I could quote to the same purpose; but these few, I apprehend, may suffice, to expose the arrant falsehood, weakness, and deceit, of the pre-electarian doctrine: neverthe-

less, if any thing further accrue to you, I am willing to wait for your relief.

JUD. It is enough ; and I am now sensible of the fallacious nature of that delusion, by which so many credulous and undiscerning mortals, have been misled ; and will ever acknowledge myself indebted for my deliverance.

GEN. If persuaded of your mistake, the bar will then be removed, from understanding election, as meant by the apostle, in writing to that people. As God foreseeing all things, he, no doubt, very well knew, that the Jews, from their wonted prejudices, would certainly reject the gospel ; therefore, in order to leave that people inexcusable, it was first offered to them, before being sent to the Gentiles. But since they (*viz.* the Jews) made light thereof, and put it from them, it was but right it should be preached to them that would receive it.

Now, since the Jews (who are called his chosen and elect people), by rejecting the gospel, lopt off themselves from salvation, when offered to them, what then becomes of the pre-electarian doctrine, of their state being certified as unalterable for the future ?

It is, therefore, now evident, from the above, that whatever privileges people are elected to, they, by rejecting, or yet neglecting the means thereof, may thereby forfeit and cut off themselves, from said privileges or benefits, annexed thereto. For, if election signified not the outward privileges, but eter-

nal life, as understood by the pre-electarians, and that they could never either forfeit, or come short thereof, the Jewish nation, by whom Christ was crucified, and even Judas who betrayed him, is not there excepted, of missing heaven or eternal life, according to the pre-electarian doctrine. For every soul of that people (without exception), are comprehended within the bond of their election; therefore, could never possibly come short thereof, according to the above. But in truth, the Jewish privileges, as observed in this dialogue, to which they are said to have been elected, were only the possession and temporal blessings of Canaan. But they, by despising the goodness of God, in rejecting their own mercy, or privileges of the gospel, when offered unto them, were utterly dispossessed of the above, and sent a packing for ever.

Hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the foregoing, that the election spoken of by the apostle, means only the electing of nations, commonwealths, or bodies of people, into the privileges of the gospel; and each thereof, rewarded or punished, according to the improvement or misimprovement of these privileges, which they are elected unto. And not as supposed by the Electarians, who hold the gospel in unrighteousness, *viz.* these anti-christian locusts, or Augustin monks and friars of the Romish church. And to proceed,

We may, therefore, now infer, from the above, that, though elected into the privileges

of the gospel, our being saved thereby is conditional; and depends altogether upon our improvement of that to which we are elected.

Further, that election is, therefore, conditional, and not positive or personal (according to the pre-electarian scheme), is evident, from what is there exprest by St. Paul, Acts xxvii. where he, on his passage to Rome, and all they that sailed with him in the ship, were in the utmost danger of being cast away. It was there certified to him, by an angel from God, "Saying, Fear not Paul: for there shall no
" man's life be lost, nor an hair fall from
" the head of any of you that are in the ship:
" for, lo, God hath given thee all them that
" sail with thee." This salvation, promised to Paul (of them that sailed with him), is not to be understood of a spiritual, but a temporal deliverance; which is evident from the soldiers' intention to have killed the prisoners; lest any of them should have escaped. Though this promise, made to Paul of his deliverance (and of all them that sailed with him), was positive; yet we see, that the accomplishment thereof, depended entirely upon conditions; as is evident from the 31st verse of said chapter; and also, in the beginning of the former, when the ship-men were about to leave or flee out of the ship, by the boat, "Then Paul
" said to the centurion, and to the soldiers,
" Except these (*viz.* the sailors), abide in the
" ship, ye cannot be saved."

Now, as the salvation of those that were in the ship, was conditional, and depended en-

tirely upon the sailors' abiding in the ship to work the vessel; so did the salvation of those that were elected into the privileges of the gospel or christian church, depend upon the improvement; or reprobation, on the misimprovement of these privileges, which they were elected unto.

From hence, it is, therefore, now evident, from the foregoing texts, that, though the temporal salvation of every soul of them that sailed with Paul, in that dangerous voyage, was certified unto him, their deliverance therefrom was conditional, and depended altogether upon the sailors' acting fuitable to their proper stations: for he saith exprefsly, that, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." As in the one, so does it fare in the other: for, though the whole human race were elected into the privileges of the gospel, their salvation, or being saved thereby, depends solely upon the improvement of these duties contained in the gospel, to which they were elected, And if we, from being off our guard, by neglect, or otherwise, come short thereof, repent and turn unto God, our iniquities shall be blotted out, as taught therein by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

Before I wind up, I shall, therefore, add the following text, in proof of man's salvation being conditional, after his being elected into the privileges of the gospel; and depends solely upon his improvement of these privileges, and duties contained in that gospel, to which he was elected. The text referred to, is in

2 Pet. i. 10. "Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for, if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."

Hence, if the calling and election of those to whom the apostle Peter wrote, was confirmed by their being elected, why does Peter order them, saying, Give diligence to make it sure? If they were already confirmed therein, by God's unalterable decree, why does the apostle require of them to make it sure? If their salvation was already secured by God, it was vain for Peter, to require of them to secure it. "If ye do these things (which are contained in the former part of this chapter), ye shall never fall."

The above tells us of their being liable in falling from that election, whereunto they were called.

It is, therefore, now evident, from the foregoing, that such as were elected or called to the above privileges, their salvation was conditional, and depended upon their lives being conformed to the duties, contained in that gospel, to which they were called.

JUD. Though fully convinced before, of being misled, I am now more and more sensible of the deceit whereby I have been ensnared; and, therefore, acknowledge my hearty and most grateful thanks, for my deliverance from priest-craft, in that wherewith I was prepossessed through the prejudice of education.

GEN. I am, therefore, not only happy at your deliverance, but do heartily wish, that

all mankind were in a like situation with yourself.

But, to conclude this subject, one thing I would ask, and is as follows. Is it possible, that any goodness could have been superior to the goodness of the supreme Being?

JUD. No.

GEN. If God, according to the pre-electarian doctrine, had pre-elected, or made choice, I shall pre-suppose of only one third of the human race, was he not thereby good?

JUD. Yes.

GEN. But, if I shall further pre-suppose, that either the same, or a second supreme Being, should have pre-elected or made choice of two thirds of the above race, would not this have been a superior goodness to that of the first?

JUD. Most certainly.

GEN. If the goodness, therefore, of the last, in making choice of two thirds, would have been superior to the goodness of the first, would not either the same, or a third supreme Being, in pre-electing to eternal life, or making choice of a whole human race, without exception (save only such thereof as despised and rejected their own mercy, when offered unto them; and thereby excluded themselves), have been incomparably superior in goodness, to both the other two?

JUD. That, for certain, is an undeniable truth.

GEN. The first thereof, is the God of the predestinarians, or pre-electarians; but the third

or last of which, who acts impartially towards all, and without respect of persons, is he who is the God of the universe. For no goodness therein, can possibly exceed or be superior to that of the supreme God, the Creator, Preserver, and Upholder, of all things; and also, presides, superintends, over-rules, and governs the whole.

But further, to illustrate the above; Almighty God, in his electing only a part of mankind to eternal life, and leaving the rest thereof to perish in endless or everlasting misery, as represented and set forth by the Electarians, is nothing more, than only a mere finite existence.

JUD. No: it was in God's power to have elected every human soul, as easily as one; though, for reasons best known to himself, he chose only a part; therefore, he is not finite, when in his power to have acted otherwise.

GEN. Why did God elect any of said race, or one thereof, more than another?

JUD. It was only out of his mere good pleasure, that he elected so much as one soul thereof.

GEN. If God, from out of his mere goodness, elected a part, or, I shall suppose, one third of mankind, he had certainly been better or greater still, in goodness, if he had (as observed in the above), elected two thirds of said race: and if the whole, he had certainly been infinitely more good and great still; for no goodness is infinite, where a greater goodness can possibly ensue—No.

Now, if God is such a one, as represented by the Electarians, he is limited in goodness; and therefore, not infinite—No: and, if not infinite, he is, therefore, only greater in degree than they.

Hence, the above would actually be the case, if salvation depended upon, and were only an effect or consequence of personal or particular election, as supposed by the Electarians. For they that limit God, though but in the smallest degree, in that which is conformable to his nature, circumscribe him in the whole. Therefore, however much they may impose upon themselves, in striving to reduce God from an infinite, to a finite existence; he, *viz.* the God in whom they believe as such, is not in truth the God of the universe—No; but only a mere fictitious god; or, at least, one of their own making, in whom they trust, with confidence, to whatever appears to refer thereto.

The End of the Third Volume.

